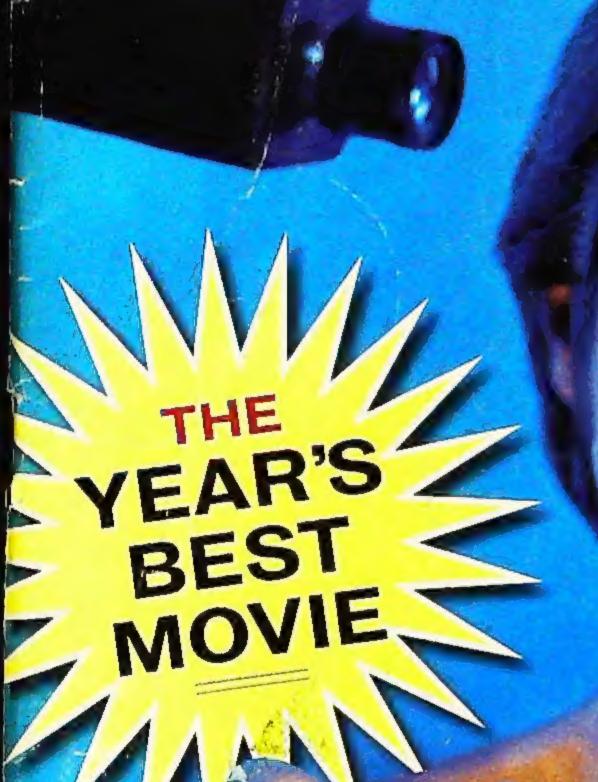
'Godzilla' Wimps Out Le'Scoop'de Cannes FIGURE KLY





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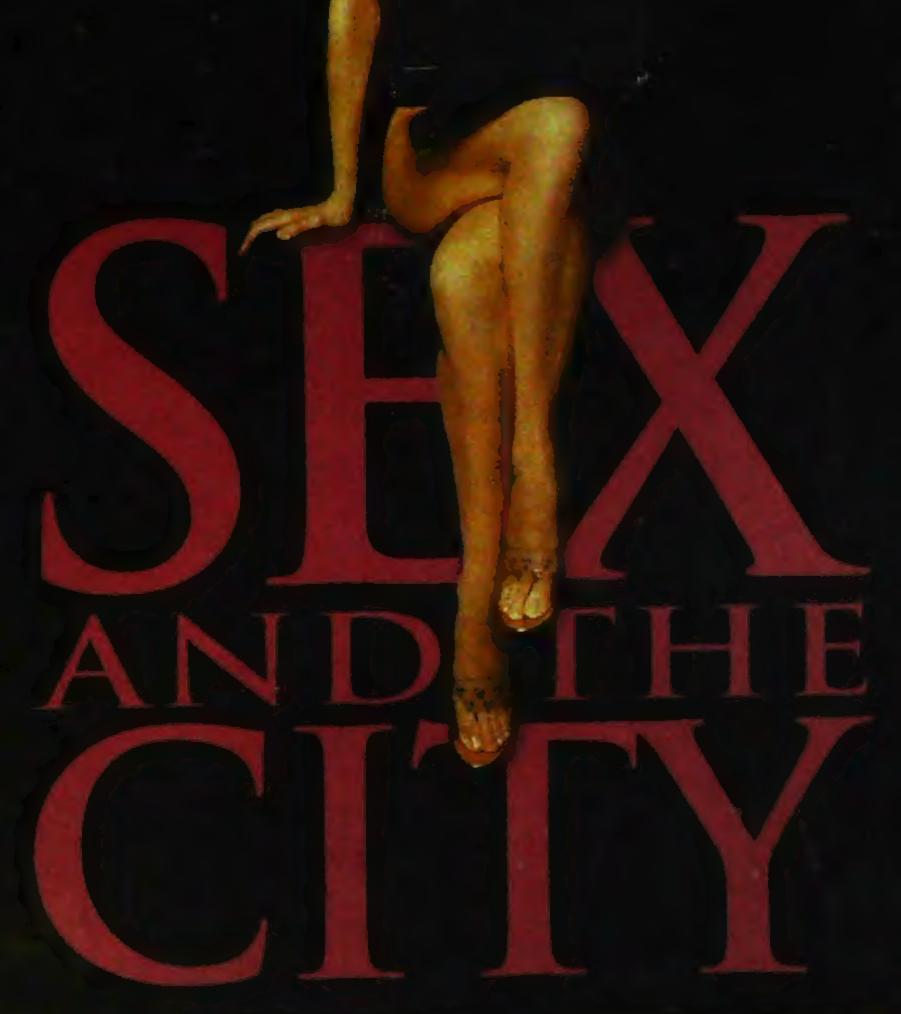
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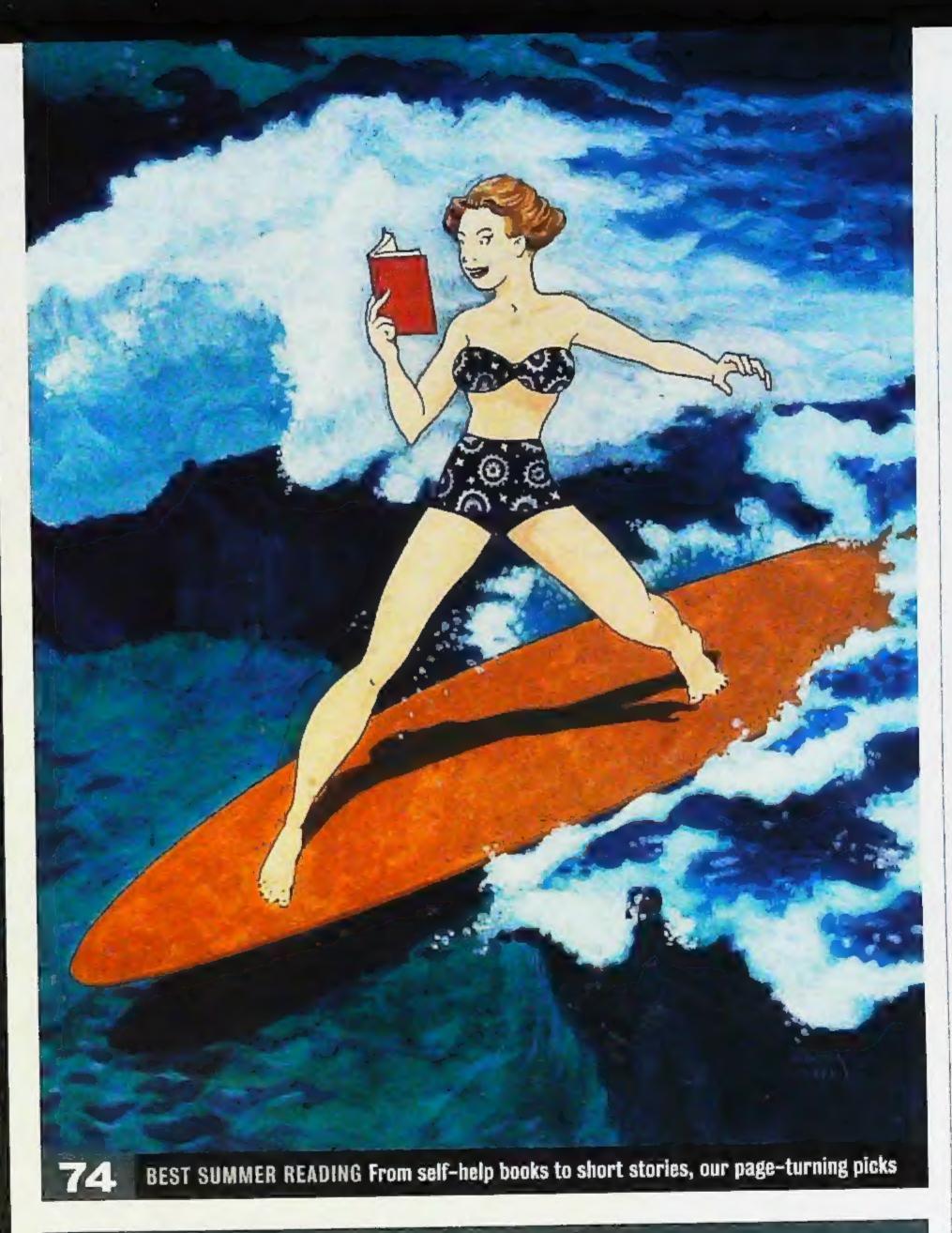
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### NEWS & NOTES

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#### ON THE COVER

Carrey photographed for EW by Robert Trachtenberg in L.A. on May 8, 1998

ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY (185% 10430454) !!

PUBLISHED WEEKLY EXCEPT SIWLEKLY THE LAST ISSUES OF FEBRUARY JUNE AUGUST AND DECEMBER AND WITH AN EXTRA INSUE IN MAY BY ENTERTAINMENT WEEKER INC. A WHOLLY OWNED SUSSIDIARY OF TIME INC PRINCIPAL OFFICE, 1675 GROADWAY NEW YORK NY 16018 JOHN EQUINES PRESIDENT GEORGE & VOLUMUTA TREASURER ROBERT E MCCARINY SECRETARY PERIODICALS POST AGE PAID AT NEW YORK BY AND ADDITIONAL MAILING DEFICES US SUBSCRIPTION \$51 40 FOR 52 ISSUES ICANADA POST INTERNATIONAL PUBLICATIONS MAIL ICAMADIAN DISTRIBUTION SALES AURICMENT NO SASSSI OST 12400004797 CENADA POST ACTUPNS POSTAL STN A. P.O. BO ASST TORONTO ON MEW SHE POSIMASTER SCHO ADDRESS CHANGES TO ENTERTAINMEN WELLY POST OFFICE BOX 10505 TAMPA FI STOSD DOOR STOOD ENTERTAINMENT WEEKS INC ALL RIDGES RESERVED REPRODUCTION IN WHOLE OR IN PART WITHOUT PERMISSION IS PROBBITED ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY IS A REC ISTERED INADEMAND OF ENTERTAINMENT 24 The Truman Pro The star is serious and the buzz is deafening—but can The Truman Show really turn Jim Carrey into the next Tom Hanks? BY BENJAMIN SVETKEY

32 Let's Talk About Sex HBO's new comedy series Sex and the City, starring Sarah Jessica Parker, contains enough singles-scene dirty talk to make Howard Stern blush. (Okay, maybe not, but it sure is racy!) BY A J JACOBS

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MAI

Preview issue (#432, May 15) appealed to the majority, a handful of readers had a, umm, passionate response to Rob Brunner's review of Hanson's 3 Car Garage: "I swear on my mother's grave that if you ever, ever, ever put down my man isaac [Hanson] again, I will hunt you down like the beast you are!" warned Elizabeth Johnson of Wellington, Fla. One brave soul, Katle Klemp of Rolling Meadows, Ill., wrote in Brunner's defense, including a quote attributed to the "great" Voltaire (no less): "I know you have gotten a ton of E-mail from overzealous Hanson fans complaining about your review.... "I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it." "MMM Candide," anyone?

Sneak Peeks

Affleck and Liv Tyler: They are both beautiful, with the same dark hair...and blush? Is Ben wearing blush? Please tell me it's just a sunburn!

ALLISON BELLOMO

bellomo@acsu.buffalo.edu Lewiston, N.Y.

giving too much away in your preview of *The Truman Show*. With absolutely no idea what it was about, I saw an advance screening last fall. Ignorance was truly bliss; not having seen any commercials or trailers, I wasn't anticipating any scenes or dialogue and was able to take it all in. I'll be back opening night.

JAMES LAMB

tvjames@earthlink.net Los Angeles

IN RECENT YEARS, PLENTY of straight actors such as Tom Hanks, Kevin Kline, and Wil-

reader mail. Address letters to Ententainment Weekly, 1675 Broadway, New York, NY 10019 E-mail can be sent to letters@ew.com. All correspondence must include your name, address, and daytime telephone number. Letters may be edited for clarity or length.

Subscription Problems? Call 1-800-828-6882 characters to the point that it's become commonplace. So why all the hue and cry over Anne Heche in Six Days, Seven Nights? Enough already. Rock Hudson believably played against "type" his entire career. I, a straight male, am looking forward to seeing the sexy Ms. Heche in the film and will no doubt be wishing I was in Harrison Ford's shoes.

teelcee@aol.com
Henderson, Nev.

Sizing Kate Up

eyes when I saw "Girth of a Nation" had a photo of Kate Winslet. I would hardly call Kate "full figured." She has a real body. Let's break for a reality check, shall we? I saw Meg Ryan in a video store once and had to suppress the urge to call 911. Kate, don't sell out—as Helen Hunt has—to the worshipers of the Bony and the Gaunt!

kwells@cweil.com
Del Mar, Calif.

I'M NOT SAYING THAT there's anything wrong with being chubby—but Kate Winslet is not fat (we've all seen her naked), and she does not belong in the same category as the frumpy overdone secretary Mimi. Winslet is a good role model to girls who aren't interested in seeing their ribs. GABE RODRIGUEZ

rodriguez1@juno.com Florence, Ore.

search to tell them that
"women were tired of being
asked to live up to unrealistic
standards of body weight and
size"? I have one word for
them: DUH!

LORRAINE SCHWARTZ

lessyr98@aol.com Pawcatuck, Conn.

Video Vanguard

MY CONGRATULATIONS TO Ty Burr on being the first critic to finally get [Paul] Verhoeven's Starship Troopers. After reading pan after pan of what I found to be a very intelligent, super-ironic send-up of the sci-fi blockbuster genre and its fascistic undertones, I had begun to suspect that mainstream movie critics had finally become desensitized to any film that fell outside of Hollywood's own predictable ideologies. Following the equally insightful critique of The Game, it seems that your Video section has found a valuable niche, using hindsight to offer new criticisms on films

that—for whatever reason weren't originally seen with the clarity they deserved.

DAVID CONNER

connersf@aol.com San Francisco

### Trash Talk

movie review titled "Drive By Shooting" by Lisa Schwarzbaum. She writes, "...truck crashing through a mobile home (trash-on-trash crime?)." That is the most deliberate sarcastic comment I've ever read in your magazine. Who does she think she is? I live in a trailer, and my father is a truck driver who also lives in a mobile home. They are nice homes to live in when you aren't so damn lucky as Ms. Schwarzbaum.

GREGORY COOK

gcook687@aol com Shreveport, La.

CORRECTION: The tally on Don Johnson's marital status is 1 engagement (new), 2 marriages (to Melanie Griffith), 2 annulments (dating to 1968).

#### WWW.EW.COM

Cannes Do

See online-only photos from the Cannes International Film Festival.

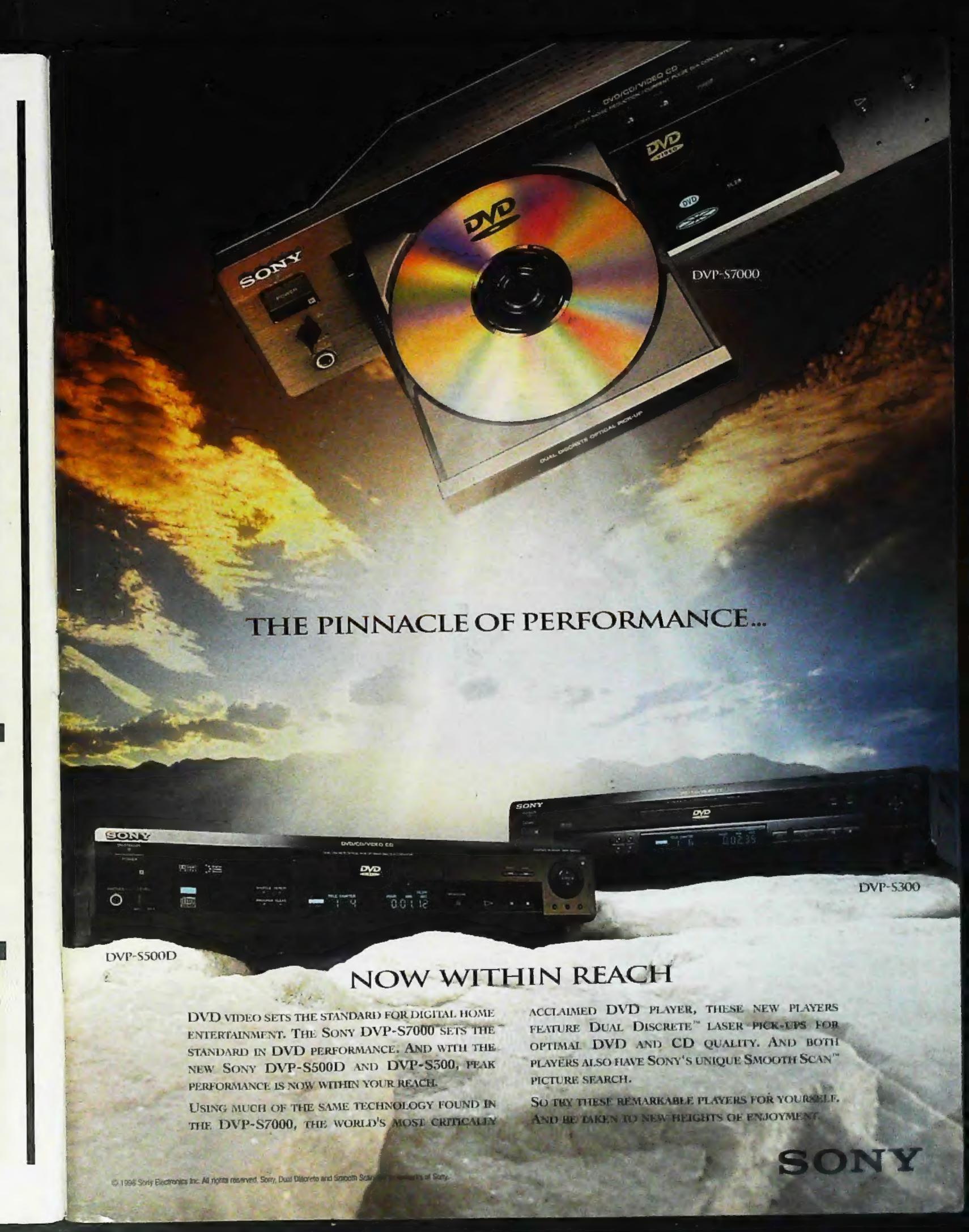
Everyone's a Critic

Post your reviews of Godzilla, Bulworth, Dave Matthews Band, and more.

#### NEXTWEEKINEW

Inside the expanding hiphop empire of Master P. Plus reviews of

- ◆ A Perfect Murder, with Michael Douglas (Movies)
- ◆ The latest nonfiction saga, Ship of Gold in the Deep Blue Sea (Books)
- New CDs from Brandy and John Fogerty (Music)



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more of a peep than a roar.

by Rob Brunner and Dave Karger

HE BIGGER THEY are, the harder...

Okay, with a \$55.7 million, four-day opening weekend, it would be an exaggeration to say that Sony's Godzilla has fall-

number of theaters (3,310, totaling 7,363 screens), the size-touting remake of the 1954 Japanese monster flick opened to poor reviews anddespite the predictions—did not even come close to The Lost World: Jurassic Park's \$90.2 million take on the same weekend last year. Heck, last week's Powerball winners made more than Godzilla, and that was after taxes.

numbers."

All this still leaves the

ward a \$140 million domestic box office take. That's considerably less than the reported \$170 million spent to make the film and market it in the U.S. But the studio remains optimistic. "It's the seventhbiggest opening of all time," says a Sony spokesperson. "I don't know how anyone could be disappointed with these

nagging question, What went wrong? How could such a surefire movie spawn such a ho-hum opening? For one thing, a lack of star power (where's Will Smith

DEEP IMPACT

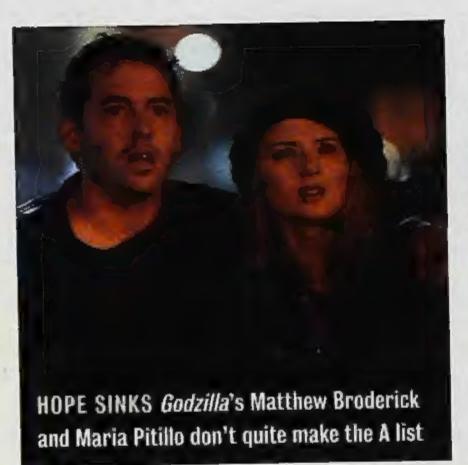
SCREAM 2

3,112 theaters.....

3,156 theaters ......\$41.2 million

Source: Exhibitor Relations 4-day weekend

...\$32.9 million



important, however, is the inescapable fact that script matters. "The story definitely was lacking," says Ed Mintz, president of the audience-polling company CinemaScore. "People said [the movie] was too computery and the creature looked fake." And while realism isn't high on most moviegoers' summer-blockbuster checklists, a lack of logic throughout the film did leave some folks scratching their heads. With so many unanswered questions, EW did a little digging to uncover the Godzilla-honest truth.

■ What are the odds that a lizard would swim across an ocean and up hundreds of miles of coastline to build a nest in one of the world's most densely populated cities?

"Zero," says John Behler, curator of reptiles at New York's Bronx Zoo. "They may move some distance to a favorite nesting area, but it's typically within a relatively short distance, from a few feet to a couple of hundred yards."

Do lizards really collect and stockpile food for their unhatched eggs?

T. rexes give their babies plenty of TLC (or so Lost

World tells us), but lizards are another story: "There's very little maternal behavior exhibited in most reptiles," says Behler. "There's no feeding of the young. They're not like birds at all. That just isn't part of reptilian makeup." Still, we can understand this mistake. We kept confusing

when you need him?). More | Godzilla with a T. rex too.

■ Could you actually use a human pregnancy test to determine if a lizard is egg-heavy?

No. "It only works on humans," says Patricia Nasshorn, president of Unipath, the company that makes the home pregnancy test Clear Blue Easy. "The hormone it tests begins with an h, which means it's a human hormone."

■ Would Godzilla really lay 200 eggs?

Lizards lay anywhere from 2 to 30 eggs at a time. But then again, Godzilla does mate with himself, so perhaps he's more potent.

■ Could Godzilla even survive in New York City?

Size, as you surely know by now, does matter. A number of lizard species do live in the New York area, but they're all small. "Lizards require a lot of sunlight," says Behler. "Lizards the size of Godzilla wouldn't survive; they're too big." And it's too cold. "Our average annual temperature is about 55 degrees, and most reptiles have trouble digesting their food or producing eggs below 78 degrees. There just isn't enough energy."

### Root Gauses

Watching the 2-hour, 19-minute Godzilla, we got that sinking feeling that we'd been here, done this. And it's no wonder. A close inspection reveals that the reptilian thriller cribs...uh, pays homage to...a number of famous scenes and characters of pop culture past. -Kristen Baldwin

#### IN GODZILLA...

The great green reptile pulls two fishing boats under; it also demolishes a dock as a fisherman frantically runs for safety.



JUST LIKE IN...

Jaws (left), in which a great white nearly pulls a boat under; it also demolishes a dock as a fisherman frantically swims for safety.

Cameraman Victor Palotti (Hank Azaria), who captures the monster's arrival in New York City on videotape, is nicknamed Animal.



TV drama Lou Grant, in which photographer Dennis Price (Daryl Anderson, left), who captures news events in LA. on film, is nicknamed Animal.

**New York City's** MetLife building is still standing after Godzilla tears a gaping hole out of its middle.



Death Becomes Her, in which Goldie Hawn (left) is still standing after Meryl Streep shoots a gaping hole out of her middle.

**Matthew Broderick** and Maria Pitillo stumble upon a giant nest of incubating eggs in Madison Square Garden.



Aliens, in which Sigourney Weaver (left) stumbles upon a giant nest of incubating eggs on a desolate planet.

Agile baby Godzillas chase Broderick and crew through **Madison Square** Garden and slam against barricaded metal arena doors.



Jurassic Park (left), in which agile velociraptors chase youngsters Tim and Lex and slam against barricaded metal kitchen doors.

An embarrassed Broderick responds to a compliment from costar Vicki Lewis by saying "She thinks I'm cute."



TV's Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer, in which an ecstatic Rudolph responds to a compliment from a doe by shouting "Sho thinks I'm cute!"

### HOTSheet

What the country is talking about this week...

- 1 The Last Days of Disco A film about a Studio 54-like nightclub. To give you the full experience, they won't let people like you into the theater.
- 2 Powerball A retired Illinois couple won the \$195 million jackpot. "They plan to stay just the way they are," said their VP of media relations.
- 3 Porn stars They're getting health insurance. They'd have joined before, but they didn't want to be in a union called SAG.
- 4 North Dakota AAA says it is the cheapest vacation spot in America. Of course it is-you're going by yourself.



- **45** Hope Floats A citified Sandra Bullock returns to her smalltown roots after being humiliated on national TV. They ran Speed 2.
- 6 Viagra They've warned men not to take it if they're on heart medicine. Consequently, a lot of men have stopped taking heart
- 7 Godzilla It had a disappointing \$55.7 million

opening weekend. Maybe it didn't get enough publicity.

- 8 Carol Channing The perennial Hello, Dolly! star claims she had sex twice during 41 years of marriage. That's twice the national average.
- 9 Pager nightmare A technical snafu meant several million people didn't get their important messages. "Time to check the satellite" must have been one of them.
- 10 Knicks tix Next year courtside seats will cost \$1,350. The only ones who can afford them are basketball players.
- 11 Bridget Jones's Diary The British best-seller is a literary Ally McBeal. A new genre-the lack-of-romance novel.
- 12 Charlie Sheen Another troubled star checks into rehab. The good news is that most of his actor friends will be there to welcome him.
- 13 Mariah Oarey She sold her house in ritzy Westchester County for \$20 million. Out there that's a "fixer-upper."
- 14 Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman CBS canceled the successful show. They wanted Bikim Quinn, Lifeguard Woman.
- 15 Lyme disease The FDA has approved a vaccine for it. Rats! That's how we scared away weekend visitors.



DAY From left, ER's John Aylward, Reuben, and Trevor Morgan

### NBC Sees Green

Green Day

WHEN YOU THINK of heart- | on the Billboard album chart. tugging weepy ballads, you think "My Heart Will Go On," "End of the Road," or even "I Will Always Love You," right? You certainly don't think of sneering punk-rockers like Green Day. But if you've paid attention during the past few weeks of network TV, you've been hearing a lot of the

song "Good Riddance (Time of Your Life)"-an uncharacteristically mellow acoustic tune complete with a string sec-

tion-keeps turning up on the tube. The song accompanied a strangely sentimental Seinfeld montage at the end of the prefinal-episode clip show and also played a major role in two recent ER episodes, both of which focused on the death of a 12-year-old boy. (Gloria Reuben, who plays physician's assistant Jeanie Boulet, sang the song at the boy's funeral.) Following the Seinfeld episode, sales of the band's platinum album Nimrod have increased by nearly a third (according to SoundScan), jumping 20 spots Day TV." —Rob Brunner

But as odd as it is that a bunch of snotty punks have suddenly become this season's prime purveyors of sap, it's stranger still that TV's farewell song of the moment is titled "Good Riddance." "I purposefully didn't put that in the script," says ER executive story editor Samantha Bay Area bad boys: Their | Corbin. "I figured if I wrote,

'And then she sings the song 'Good Riddance' at Scott's funeral,' that would probably raise a few flags."

For cynical



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It's an open road and nowhere to be. It's racing through warm June air,

as thin and dry as a professor's joke. It's lots of room to hold lots of



stuff (like say, your friends for example). It's engine technology born

of racetracks but sent away to private school. It's never having to think

"Will it start?" It's being the twelfth caller. It's a million stars, just a

moonroof away. It's a road, consider it handled. It's the Acura Integra-

The True Definition of Luxury. Yours. ★ACURA





# FLASHES

HAILING HAIL It started with that infernal flying cow. After Twister blew away the competition with a \$242 million take at the domestic box office, Hollywood discovered a new lethal weapon, and it wasn't Mel Gibson. The doom machine of choice: the weather. After Twister came Hard Rain, featuring out-of-control flooding, and now, Deep Impact, with its apocalyptic tidal wave. Come August, the forecast gets even grimmer, as Sean Connery tries to rule the world's climate in The Avengers. And the word online is that Spike Lee may produce a 007-style script featuring weather-wielding baddies. (Lee has no comment.) Can we chalk all this up to El Niño-phobia? Stu Ostro, meteorology supervisor at The Weather Channel, thinks filmmakers have tapped into a general "hidden interest in weather." Like sports, says

Ostro, weather has fans:
"You're seeing this stuff because the people making the movies know it sells." But while filmmakers may have identified a new audience, Ostro says the concept of world domination via weather is, well, just Hollywood. "Folks who believe this could happen are pretty much psychotic," he says. "This is not a meteorological reality." —Daniel Fierman

CIVIC UNDRESS See what Viagra has wrought? Recently, a number of TV shows same hot-and-heavy premise-couples spicing up their sex lives by indulging their passions in public. First, Dharma and Greg got it on alfresco in San Francisco's Ghirardelli Square (their rationale: Everybody else was home watching the final epsiode of Seinfeld). Then Ally McBeal and The Simpsons both ended the season with a, ahem, bang: Georgia and Billy buffed the law firm's conference table on Ally, and Homer and Marge turned Springfield into a sexual playground on The Simpsons. What's with all the public nooky? "We like to peep," says psychologist Joyce Brothers. Besides, "cable can get away with so much, so here is something network TV can get away with." True, but Simpsons exec

story editor Matt Selman says

it was just a way of exploring

a new side to the characters.

have featured the

Hollywood Hollywords 565

CNV \see-en-vee\ adj: of or relating to complete opposites; an acronym for "chocolate 'n' vanilla." ("Courtney Love and Jeffrey Katzenberg are so CNV.")

pitcharazzi \pich-a-rot-see\ n, pl: aggressive marketers who won't back down when pitching studios promotional tie-ins; a combined form of pitchmen and pacambined form of pitchmen and paparazzi. ("Those guys just wouldn't give up with the Titanic scuba gear. They're such pitcharazzi.")

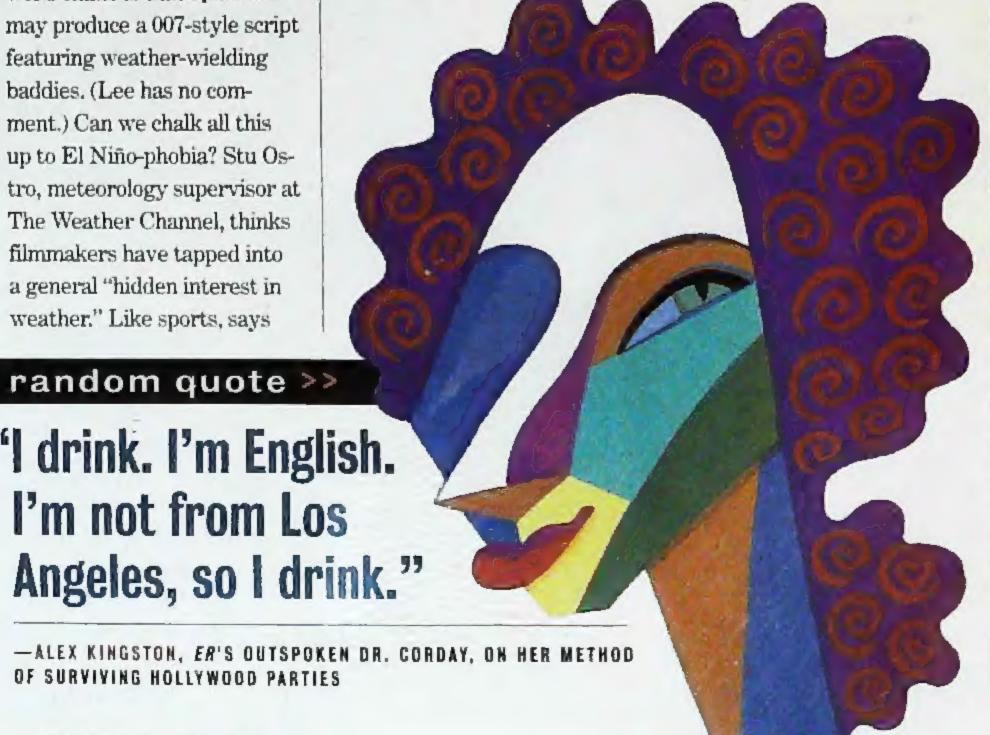
**no second act** n: lacking depth, one-dimensional. ("She may be a big star, but she has no second act.")

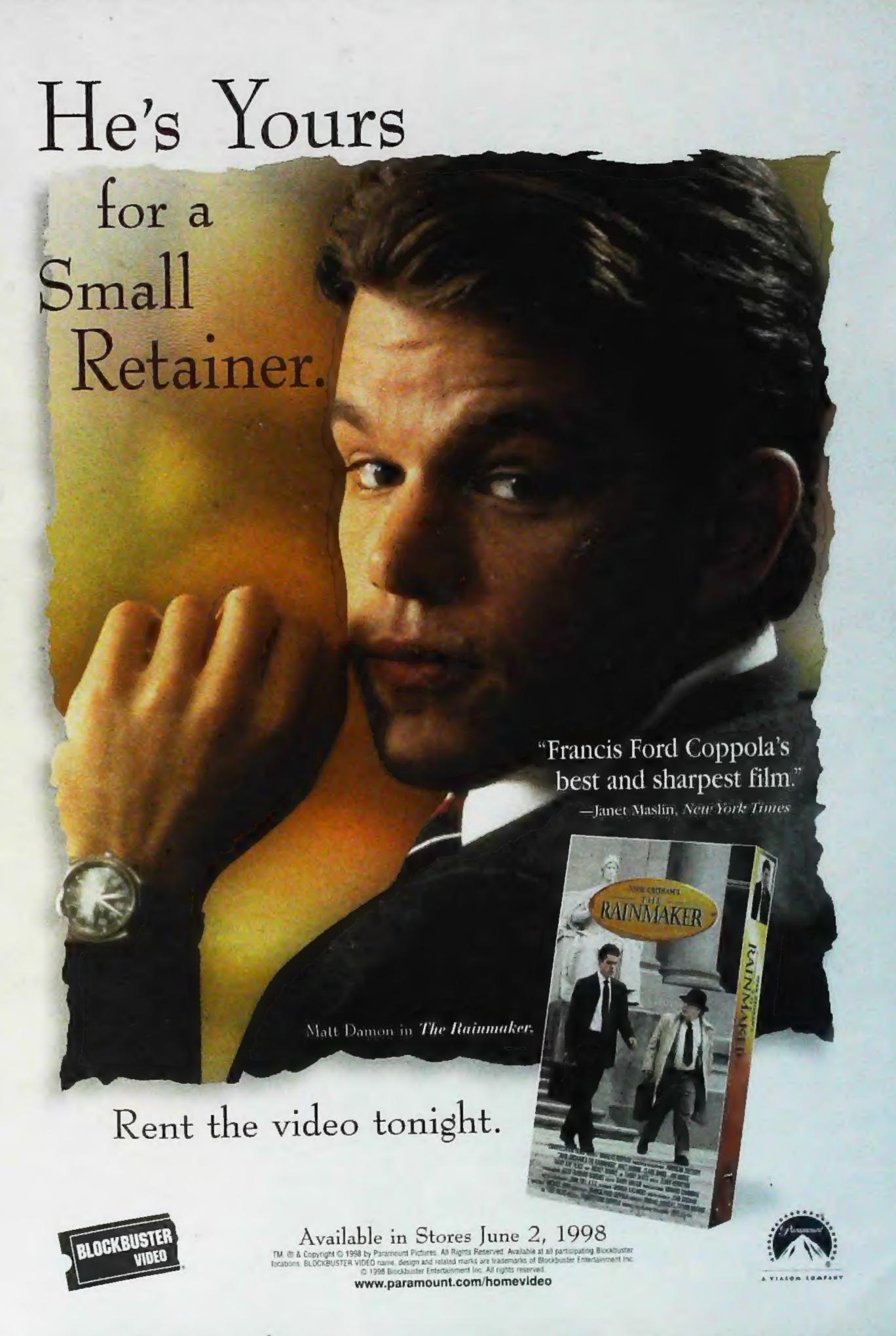
blockout n: veil of secrecy, especially pertaining to high-profile Hollywood films. ("The studio has a blockout on Psycho, which is why we can't talk to the press about it.")

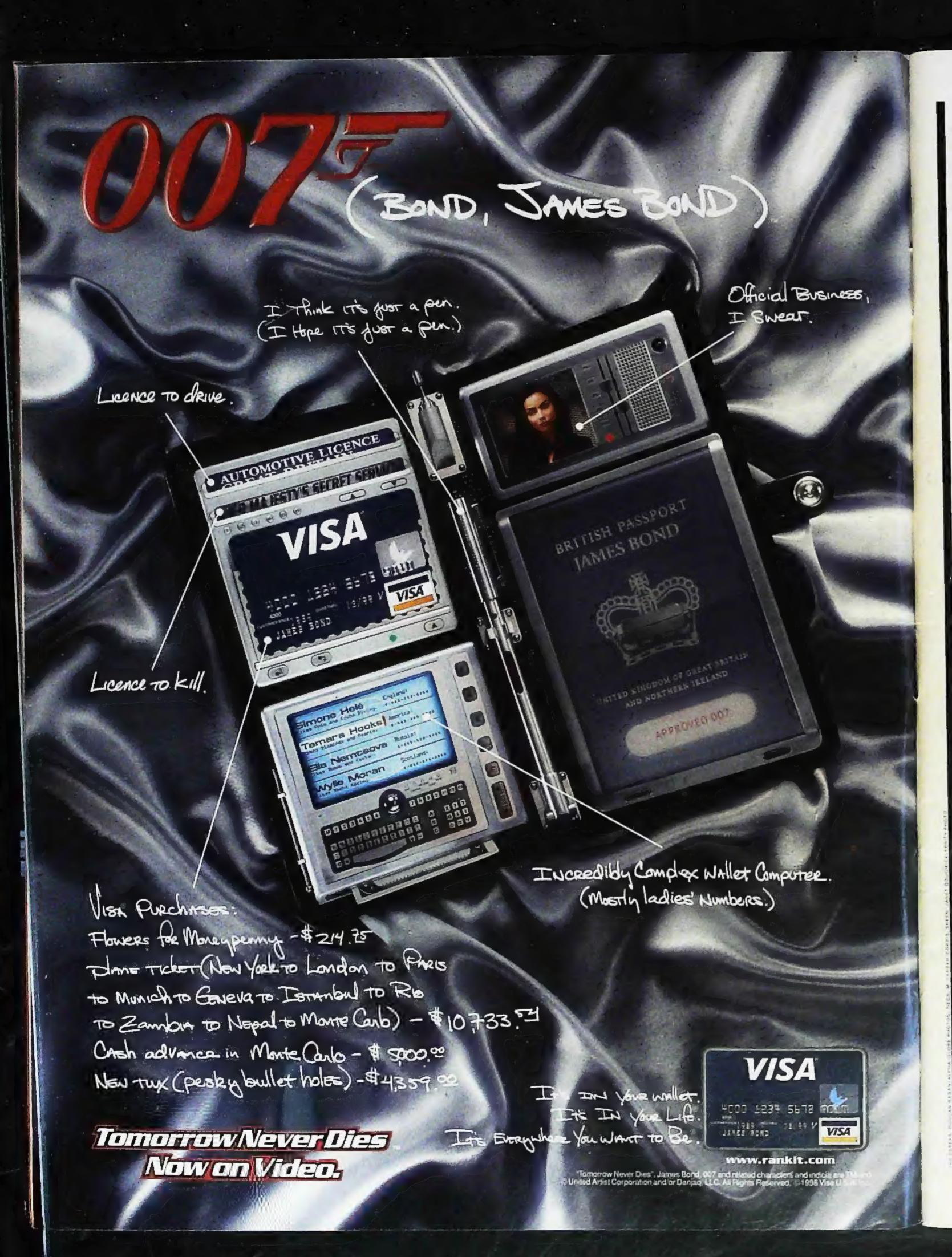
"Marge's ass had never been on TV before," he notes, "and now it has." —Suna Chang

ETC. Hold your horses! That's what national syndicators and Studio USA, owners of the Jerry Springer Show, decided to do, pulling at the 11th hour a way-too-hot-for-TV episode that featured-yikes!-bestiality. Titled "I Married a Horse," the show, which was originally scheduled to air nationwide May 22, told the story of a gentleman who married his equine companion. (Anticipating a ruckus, Springer producers also sent affiliates an alternate episode, "Past Guests Do Battle.") According to a Springer source, there was "absolutely nothing graphic" on the show, though it did feature an appearance by the beloved horse in question. A spokeswoman would not say why the show was nixed, and the usually outspoken master of trash talk declined to comment.

ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID COWLES







### LEO ADS UP

omeday, there's going to be an issue of Entertain-MENT WEEKLY without a single mention of Leonardo DiCaprio. But this is not it. Leo, you see, keeps putting out hush-hush Japanese commercials that will never air in the U.S., and we feel compelled to review them.

Last month, there was one for Orico credit cards; now senior writer A.J. Jacobs considers the actor's latest-a twopart campaign for Suzuki wagons.

Talk about range! In the space of two 30-second ads, our young thespian runs the gamut from

naughty rascal to paternal, Up With People mensch. And not only that, he speaks Japanese! (We'd always heard rumors he was bilingual.) First, the rascally Leo. In this spot, he barrels his miniwagon past two babes whose skirts billow up à la Mar-

ilyn Monroe. Our hero screeches to a halt, backs up, tells each the color of her panties ("white ... strawberry prints"), then winks. Aside from a couple of plot-logic problems (why is he trying to pick up chicks in a Soccer Mom-mobile?), the



spot is a winner, a saucy, fast-moving romp. And good preparation for another scalawag in Leo's future: his \$21 million role in American Psycho. Undie peeping today, skull sex tomorrow. A-

The second spot takes place at a Little League baseball

game, bringing to mind Leo's sports-themed film The Basketball Diaries, though with less heroin. Leo pulls up in his Suzuki wagon, pops out, and gives a pep talk to the losing peewee pitcher: "Don't give up!" It's a noble effort-at his best, Leo echoes Pat O'Brien in Knute Rockne, All American-but in the end, it's too schmaltzy. And come to think of it, what's the character's motivation? Why's he hanging around these boys? Shouldn't he be playing with kids his own age? C



TIEGS

and meditation master Rod Stryker, 40. It's Tiegs' fourth marriage, Stryker's first.

**DICAPRIO THROWS A PITCH...** 

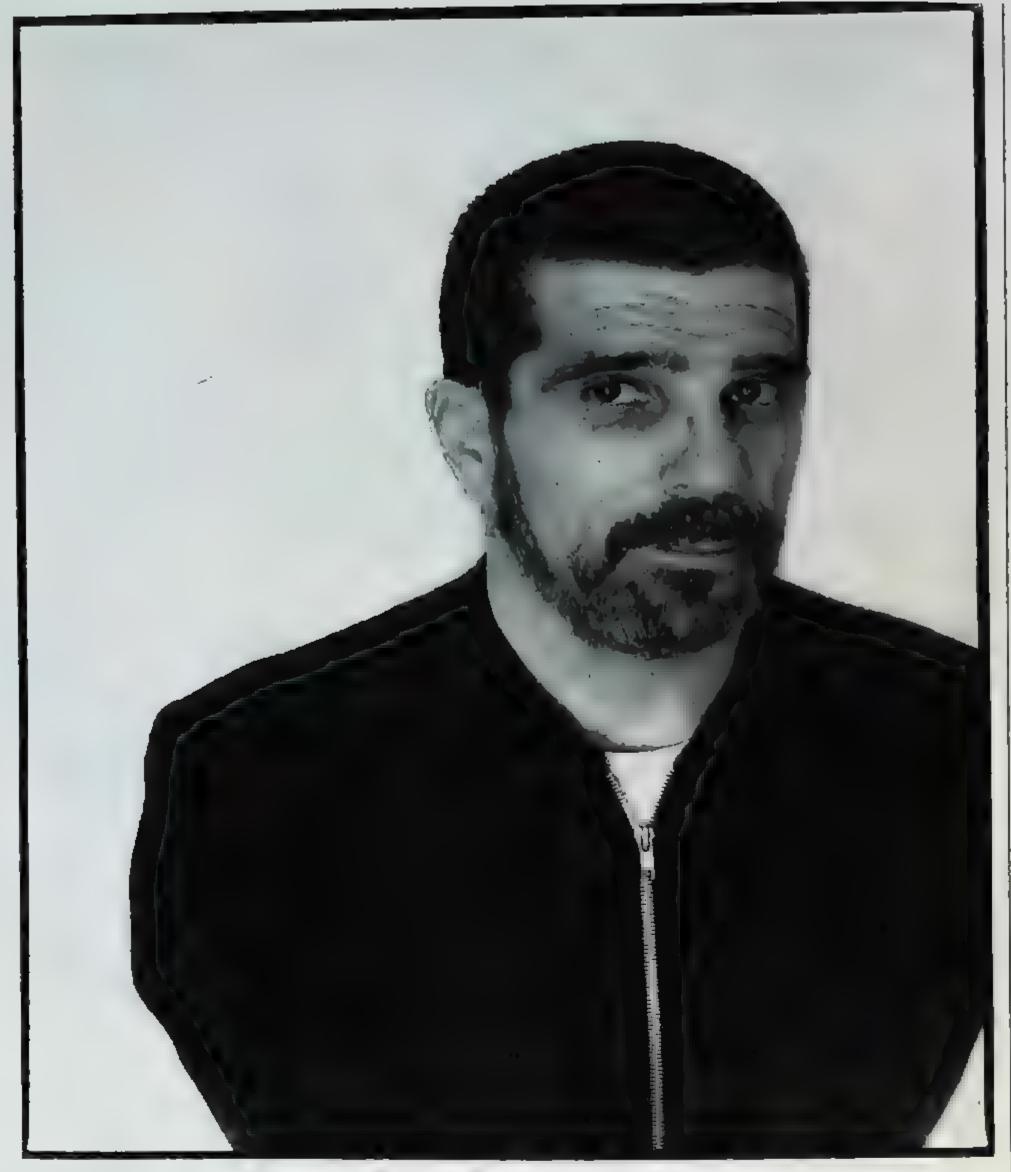
JAILED Tattooed rock-er Tommy Lee, 35, began serving a 180-day prison term at LA. County Jail May 20 after being sentenced on spousal-abuse charges stemming from a February assault on his wife, Pamela Anderson, 30. Lee, who pleaded no contest in April, was also ordered to do 200 hours of community service and donate \$5,000 to a Santa Monica battered women's shelter.

DEALS Liquor glant and Universal parent Seagram Ltd. announced plans to buy PolyGram from Dutch electronics glant Philips. The \$10.6 billion purchase will give Seagram "a truly impressive roster of musical talent," said Seagram CEO Edgar Bronfman

Jr. at a May 21 press conference. The combined businesses bring together such diverse artists as Elton John, Chumbawamba, Hanson, and Shania Twaln under one corporate umbrella. To help fund the deal, Seagram will sell its Tropicana juice business.

RECOVERING To rehab, or not to rehab? That's the question for Charlie Sheen, 32, who was treated May 20 for an unspecified drug overdose. The actor was released from the hospital May 22 and checked into Promises, a drugtreatment center in Malibu. But he stayed less than a day before fleeling. According to police, Sheen called for a limo after leaving the center, but his car was stopped by authorities. "He was medicated and had been drinking, so his doctor had him committed as a danger to himself," said Sgt. Martin Dailey of the L.A. County Sheriff's Dept. Sheen has since reentered Promises; his spokesman declines to comment.

DEATHS Actor-director
John Derek, 71, of heart fallure, May 22, In Santa Maria, Calif. A player in '50s films like The Ten Commandments, Derek staked his claim to movie fame by saying "Live fast, die young, and make a good-looking corpse" in 1949's Knock on Any Door. But his true notoriety came from marrying beautiful blonds, including Linda Evans and Ursula Andress. He cemented his Svengali-like reputation by directing his fourth wife, Bo Derek (30 years his junior), in such soft-porn duds as Tarzan, the Ape Man (1981) and Bolero (1984).... Jazz planist Dorothy Donegan, 76, of colon cancer, May 19, in L.A. Donegan rose to prominence in 1943 when she became the first black performer at Chicago's Orchestra Hall. -Suna Chang



# Yes, Mamet

In an industry where you can be an auteur or a player, David Mamet is having it both ways, pinballing between careers as a big-studio writer and an indie director. by Elizabeth Gleick

NTERIOR: A MOVIE SET INSIDE THE RICH, high-ceilinged rooms of a South London Edwardian mansion in a state of genteel decay, springtime. • Muttering lines under their breath, the pensive actors in big hats and morning coats arrange themselves in their assigned spots around a grand staircase. • The air is one of studious concentration. All is quiet. The camera rolls.

Director: Lovely. That's just great, thanks. (He turns to one actor.) Speak it out a little bit more definitely, but that's good. Let's try it again, shall we?

Cut. Can that director really be David Mamet, leaning against a wall in his tweed cap and black jeans, playing

his role so gently? The working environment Mamet has created here on the set of The Winslow Boy, his adaptation of the 1946 Terence Rattigan play, may have the same shape and momentum as one of his plays-fast and lean and elegant as a race hound, not a word wasted or out of place-but the intonations are startlingly different. Typical Mamet characters spit out four-letter words like bullets (see Glengarry Glen Ross), but today there's no profanity; only some laughter, some courteous and extremely quiet consultation, and more pleases and thank-yous than a child's etiquette lesson.

Mamet can afford to be polite. At age 50, the Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright has found a unique, prestigious, and profitable niche in Hollywood, sliding effortlessly between writing popular studio movies (The Untouchables, The Edge, and last winter's biting political satire Wag the Dog, which he cowrote) and directing his own more cerebral independent films (like 1994's Oleanna, which he adapted from his own scathing play about sexual harassment). This spring, Mamet has scored his first unqualified indie hit—The Spanish Prisoner, starring Rebecca Pidgeon (Mamet's wife, who also stars in The Winslow Boy) as the is-sheor-isn't-she femme fatale and Steve Martin as a shady mogul who lures Campbell Scott into a web of intrigue.

Even as more and more art-house offerings are languishing on the remainder shelf, Spanish Prisoner, Mamet's fifth directorial effort, is shaping up to become Sony Pictures Classics' highest-grossing movie (\$5.9 million, so far) since John Sayles' Lone Star. It also celebrates one of Mamet's favorite themes-the confidence game. "All of us have stories that draw us back again and again," he says. "Spielberg makes movies about the clash of alien cultures-extraterrestrials and earthlings, or the Africans and the Americans, or the Jews and the Nazis. Martin Scorsese likes stories about Italian Americans and the Dalai Lama. I like telling stories about confidence games."

Despite his success,

though, Mamet has no plans to give up what he calls "this avocation of writing [studio] movies once in a while for hire." According to Spanish Prisoner coproducer Sarah Green (who is producing The Winslow Boy with Sayles' girlfriend/partner, Maggie Renzi), Mamet takes on the larger projects so he can afford to demand absolute creative control over the smaller films that he directs himself, which are much closer to his heart. They're also usually a difficult sell to mass audiences. "His stuff is unusual and doesn't pander," Green says.

Unusual, to say the least. Mamet's highly distinctive, flat, stylized dialogue-instantly recognizable in The Spanish Prisoner with its staccato exchanges and its overlapping repetitionsmake him an odd choice for big-budget films. Yet when he takes a studio assignment, he breezily tailors his work for the people writing the checks. "I get the sense that nothing's a struggle for David," says Wag the Dog producer Jane Rosenthal. When a rewrite was ordered on Wag the Dog (directed by Barry Levinson) Rosenthal says she asked him how long he needed. "I could

tell you I'll do it in six weeks and put it in a drawer for four," Mamet replied. "Or I could tell you it will take two weeks. Which would you prefer?"

For a man who fuels much of his work with duplicity, vengeance, and greed, Mamet seems surprisingly good-natured off the page. And though he tosses in references to "Eisenstein's theory of montage" and Napoleon during conversation, this father of three (he has a 3-yearold daughter with Pidgeon and two children with his first wife, actress Lindsay Crouse) grasps for an analogy much

closer to home when describing his work. Directing, Mamet explains, is like "playing dollhouse. It's actually the same process." He looks down at his fingernails, which seem to be streaked with hot pink polish. "Here my daughter and I were playing beauty parlor this morning at a quarter to seven. We were going through what you go through when you're 3: 'You come in here and say this, and then I'll say that.' That's all it is-it's just play."

Playing with the big boys, of course, means Mamet has gotten burned. He has written many scripts that have wound up in "development hell," says Pidgeon, "which has broken his heart a little bit." And the life of a Hollywood screenwriter is not one of creative fulfillment, even if your name's Mamet. "The writing's always a wonderful challenge and experiment," he says. "It's what they do to them after you write themyou look at the thing you've written and it's pretty damn good, and [then] somebody interpolates a whole new idea into a script that has your name on it." Case in point: According to Pidgeon, the kitchen-table sex scene between Jessica Lange and Jack Nicholson in director Bob Rafelson's critically drubbed 1981 remake of The Postman Always Rings Twice came from Mamet's simple stage direction, "They kiss."

But if there's one thing Mamet understands, it's the art of the deal: "The thing about Hollywood is that it's very clear who gets to do what to whom," he says. Being a pen for hire is "like being a very expensive decorator. People pay you to do a great job and they pay you enough money so that you can't say 'Oh, my God, how dare they move the lamp?"

"What makes him accept a writing assignment?" asks Pidgeon. "The money." She laughs. "I'm saying that because I know that's exactly what he would say." Says Mamet: "Well, I think that we're all greedy and ambitious. We're all human, aren't we?" But with bankability and respectability within his reach, could there be anything else that Mamet is grasping for? Mamet is reluctant to answer. But just before he heads back inside the mansion, he turns and says: "For everything."







WHAT HE REALLY WANTS TO DO IS ... Scott, Martin (top), and Pidgeon (center) in The Spanish Prisoner; Mamet directs The Winslow Boy

# She's Got The Knack

REALESTATE The search for

the perfect star shack begins with a few bars of "My Sharona." by Josh Young

THE MARKET FOR A HOLLYWOOD HOME? IF you're Claire Danes or Leonardo DiCaprio, the search for the ideal domicile begins with the answer to the trivia question "Who's the girl in the Knack's 1979 hit single?" ◆ Real estate agent Sharona Alperin, 37, is, indeed, that Sharona. Working out of the Sunset Boulevard office of the Dalton, Brown, and Long firm, Alperin, just 17 when she inspired

the lecherous No. 1 newwave ditty, has avoided obscurity by becoming a top brokerata.

In the last three years, she's found a cozy nest for new mom Julianne Moore and bachelor pads for New Line's bad-boy president of production, Michael De Luca, and the Red Hot Chili Peppers' Dave Navarro. ("Bachelors want a sexy view house where they can score," she says.) She unearthed L.A. outposts for New Yorkers like Danes, who needed a place while doing The Mod Squad, and producer Darren Star (Sex and the City). And she may deliver DiCaprio from his nomadic post-Titanic existence by finding him the perfect L.A. hangout.

"I sell the most emotional product on the market, because a star's home is their only safe haven," explains Alperin, wearing knee-high Calvin Klein boots and a tartan skirt and looking very much the rocker's muse. "Most of my first-timers are

apartments."

buying houses for THEKNACK

MYSHARONA

between \$750,000 and \$1.5 million. That's pretty amazing for people moving from

Clearly, one of the catalysts for Alperin's success-she made a record 47 transactions in 1997-is her own deer-in-theheadlights stardom. She was just an adventurous Fairfax High School senior in 1978 when the Knack's lead singer, Doug Fieger, met her in the clothing store where she worked. He persuaded her to dump her boyfriend and tour with his band. A hit song, the cover of the second album, ... But the Little Girls Understand, and ■ failed engagement to Fieger (and two more to other beaux) followed before Alperin got

OUT AND ABODE Alperin hosts a hip parade; left, the single girl her real estate license. "My life was decadent then," she admits.

"When Doug was looking for houses, he was always on tour, so I would house-shop in the limo. I'd choose five houses and then show him. One of the agents said to me, 'I've never seen anyone show houses like you; you should be an agent."

Alperin, who calls her clients "sweetie," has been putting showbiz types in their dream houses for 11 years. She works seven-day weeks, logs roughly 225 calls each weekday, and can namedrop with the best of them. While confidentiality agreements are standard, she goes

further: Her client list is written in code. And the encoding is done in her surprisingly unplush cubicle with a Sunset Boulevard view. She drives a four-door BMW, rather than a Range Rover: "My clients don't go house shopping to get a workout climbing in and out of their broker's car."

SHARONA

Sharona's specialty? Houses that aren't for sale. Shopping for writer Daniel Waters (Batman Returns), she nabbed the house where Orson Welles lived. Waters now welcomes visitors by showing them the spot in the dining room where the director keeled over. "It's a great conversation starter," he says.

In her search for a "rockin' fantastic house" for DiCaprio,

PHOTOGRAPH BY LANA 2 2 DE LAN.

she has gone mansion to mansion on his favorite streets. Recently, she stuck her head through an open window of a house being renovated—only to find a prominent agent lunching with four friends. "I said, 'Hi, I wasn't sure someone lived here," she laughs. "'Can I show your house?'"

But working with DiCaprio has been surreal even for someone as freakishly famous as Alperin. Recently, it was erroneously reported that he bought a house in Bel Air near Ronald Reagan's. "My phone was ringing off the hook with congratulations," she sighs. "I called Leo and he said, 'Just tell everyone it's true so we can look in peace."

So what is the King of Hollywood looking for in a home? Not a palace—just a humble abode. "Leo's taste is very simple," Alperin says. "Like most young bachelors looking for their first house, he wants a home, not a showplace."

Instead of a 90210 zip code—so much for movin' on up to Beverly Hills-Alperin says young stars often prefer putting down roots in funkier areas, like Los Feliz, the same hood that Brad Pitt, Madonna, and Nicolas Cage live in. In this haven of 1920s and '30s houses nestled in the hills east of Hollywood, an authentic "Spanish" (as they're called) goes for between \$500,000 and \$4 million. (You'll need a contractor, too, since many are money pits; one Young Turk passed on a \$2 million fixer-upper that needs \$500,000 to be livable.)

Other cool places to call home include the Hollywood Hills above the west end of the Sunset Strip, though couples prefer the canyon streets of Santa Monica with their ocean breezes. Of course, a beach house in Mal-

| ibu remains the status symbol. And who knows what awaits the sleepy, suburban enclave of Pasadena now that Los Feliz's poster boy, Beck, has bought a 1950sera house there.

The most popular homes combine old-fashioned glamour with modern amenitiestennis courts, pools, lush yards. Size matters only to James Cameron, studio chiefs, and agents (Alperin found what she calls "a bigpenis house" for the owner of a top production company). More typical is the producer who paid \$649,000 for a 1,500-square-foot shack, or the Oscar-winning actress who found sanctuary in a one-bedroom, one-bathroom, \$1 million West Hollywood Hills bungalow. "It's all very personal, like buying underwear," Alperin says.

Like Grisham galleys, prize houses are snapped up in bidding wars before they're even listed. Alperin recently sold four-bedroom English country house in Los Feliz to the husband-and-wife producers of Boogie Nights, Daniel Lupi and Joanne Sellar. "Sharona's obsessed with finding you the right house," says Lupi, who toured more than 100 houses in four months. "She works harder than any movie agent." More important, her clients relate to her.

"My Sharona" has an "impact on my ability to understand the entertainer's mind," she says. "There's something simpatico. You've got to care to the nth degree. You can't drop the ball for one minute." Especially if the client wants to bounce that ball. "This client I have loved one house, but he said, 'Sharona, I can't pay \$3.5 million for a house and not be able to shoot hoops." She's still on the case.









FOUR HOUSES, GELEB VIEWS DiCaprio adored this Sunset Strip hilltop hideaway (1) for himself or his mom, but it was sold before he could act. The Titanic star also perused this modern three-bedroom dwelling with ocean views (2) priced at \$1.9 million. Alperin found Orson Welles' former residence, a Colonial-style house (3), for screenwriter Waters; Welles had a shower put in the first-floor powder room so he wouldn't have to use the stairs. This three-bedroom home (4) once belonged to silent-era funnyman Stan Laurel; Alperin sold it to producer Brad Jenkel (Beverly Hills Ninja) and his wife, model Kelly Emberg.



# Navy Lady

STYLE How a former fashion scribe has become the quirky TV spokesperson of the moment. by Degen Pener

WHO Carrie Donovan, the kooky fashion lady with huge ly wacky Old Navy TV ads.

REAL CLAIM TO FAME Former fashion doyenne of The New York Times Magazine, but probably unknown to anyone who lives west of the Hudson River.

HOW SHE JOINED THE NAVY After retiring in 1994, Donovan, 70, was hired by the then-fledgling Old Navy chain to write an ad-in the form of a fashion memo-to appear weekly in the Times. "They had Hirschfeld draw me. It was on the tops of [New York] taxicabs. It was a hoot," she says. Soon af- | cuffs," she says. "The only ter, the Gap Inc. offshoot | thing they had me do was began its TV campaign starring Morgan Fairchild. "I jokingly said, 'Oh, I'd be awfully good on TV, If something happens with Morgan, let me know." Although Fairchild stayed, maybe the most comfortable

Donovan was added to the ads' cast of characters.

black glasses in the addictive- HER FAVORITE AD "Destination" Old Navy: Value," the Airport-esque spoof in which she and her canine costar, Magic, wind up flying the plane.

THE SCOOP ON MAGIC "It's a

she, you know. We all act like she's a he. I don't know why. Magic lives on the coast, as any star should. We film the ads at Silvercup Studios in Long Island City [N.Y.], and Magic flies in on the red-eye with her stand-in, Pebbles." HER AD WARDROBE All black. "I wear my own clothes, a black cashmere sweater, my pearls, and my Chanel have a pair of glasses made with nonreflective lenses."

ON HER LAST OLD NAVY SHOP-PING SPREE SHE BOUGHT platform sole, and they're

FASHONE THE WHO WHAT AND WEAR

■ DIAL C FOR... First spotted at the Oscars, designer cell-phone cases are suddenly the accessory. For their tiny StarTac phones, Minnie Driver and Bridget Fonda carry sequined cases from Kathrine Baumann. Vivica A. Fox totes one from Coach. And Susan Sarandon screens calls with a case by Manolo Blahnik.



- THE OTHER MCQUEEN Alexander isn't the only McQueen with fashlon props. After appearing posthumously in Levi's print ads last year, Steve McQueen is enjoying a stylish resurgence. He's the obvious inspiration for Gucci's fall parade of cool shades and thick turtlenecks. Plus, TAG Heuer is relaunching its Heuer Monaco, the watch that McQueen wore in his 1971 race-car hit, Le Mans.
- ALL TIED UP For a movie extolling life's simple pleasures, The Horse Whisperer is bursting at the seams with fashion tie-ins. With Ariat boots, Diego Della Valle shoes, and Calvin Klein suits lassoing as much screen time as Levi's jeans and Wrangler denim jackets, the movie is as much a travelogue for Rodeo Drive as it is for Montana's mountain vistas.
- GENTLEMEN PREFER... Heard any good blond jokes lately? George Clooney, Jason Priestley, and Drew Carey certainly have. The trio of actors have all hit the peroxide bottle. A great move, if you want to look like Billy Idol.









thing I've worn in my life. The cardigan sweaters have very high armholes—I like that. And the palazzo pants; they're these drawstring pajama pants. God knows what this fabric is, but it feels like wool jersey, and they are fabulous! I've bought three pairs. [Designer] Arnold Scaasi said he liked them and I told him, 'Run into the store "Some clogs; they have a because everything goes and it doesn't come back.'"

HER DISCOUNT Zippo, "But

nothing costs anything. You don't need one, really."

WHAT'S NEXT "Someone said to me, 'Well, you could have your own sitcom," she says. "But I don't want to work any more than this." Even so, casting agents should take note: Two weeks ago, Donovan got her SAG card. "I have to think of reasons to flash that around," she says, adding "Sidney Lumet tells me they have a falmlous health plan."



BYBENJAMIN

Verior

Guy. Mho knew?

With The Truman Othow,

Tim Carrey is presto, chango.

ROBERTRACHTENBERG



### 

SCAR NIGHT, 1999. THE BEST ACTOR envelope has just been opened. The winner bounds onto the stage, his face streaked with tears, pausing at the podium to soak up the applause. Then he turns his back to the audi-

ence, bends over, and thanks the Academy through his butt cheeks. • The most shocking thing about the foregoing fantasy sequence isn't the butt part, but that everything else could conceivably come true—at least if you buy the buzz currently humming around The Truman Show, the new Peter Weir film in which Jim Carrey attempts to prove he's more than just another elastic face. His most ambitious turn to date—he even cries on camera, something he didn't try in The Cable Guy, his last, failed stab at

cinematic somberness—it's a bracingly grown-up performance that's already winning raves (see review on page 43) and even drawing comparisons to Tom Hanks' work in Forrest Gump. "It's not Shakespeare," concedes the erstwhile pet detective, "but it's a more human character than any I've done. It's a movie about life, unrequited love, the need to accomplish something you've never been able to. It's like a Chaplin thing, with funny characters and whimsy and laughs. But it's got serious undertones and issues."

Here's the sky-high concept: Carrey plays Truman Burbank, a slightly doofy, vaguely unhappy insurance salesman who lives in a perfect home with his perfect wife (Laura Linney, last seen as Clint Eastwood's daughter in Absolute Power) in a perfect little town called Seahaven. Naturally, it all turns out to be too perfect. Truman gradually learns that Seahaven isn't what it seems, that its inhabitants are merely actors performing in front of thousands of hidden cameras. He discovers he's the unwitting star of his own hit TV series-The Truman Show-that he's lived his entire life inside a colossal soundstage, his every whisper and snore secretly videotaped and broadcast around the globe.

Imagine The Real World as conceived by Rod Serling. Or the Loud family as filmed by Allen Funt. Or reality according to George Clooney. Any way you look at it, it's a pretty provocative premise in these media-mad, video-omnipotent times. The film's inyour-face symbolism-these days all the world really is a stage, or at least a 24-hour reality-TV cable channel—already has critics and journalists tapping out gushing exegeses on how it will "revolutionize the art form" (well, that's what Larry King said in his USA Today column, giving Truman higher billing than his "I don't need Viagra" confession). Like Gump, Truman could turn out to be as much a cultural event as a box office bonanza, a message movie for the TV-addled, privacy-starved, post-Diana '90s. As Carrey puts it, "This film is insume with metaphors."

Which means the implausible may now be the inevitable: The man who fell out of a rhmoceros' birth canal in Ace Ventura: When

Nature Calls truly does seem poised on the brink of genuine dramatic stardom. And while nobody is talking about an Oscar just yet—at least not without cracking a smile stranger things have been known to happen inside the Shrine Auditorium.

PETER WEIR FIRST LAID EYES ON JIM Carrey's famously flexible face in a video store in Sydney, Australia-on an Ace Ventura: Pet Detective poster. Amazingly, the renowned auteur responsible for such films as Gallipoli, The Year of Living Dangerously, Witness, and Fearless actually rented the tape. "I remember thinking he could have had quite a career in silent movies," says Weir. "With his raw comedy and the facial contortions, you couldn't really tell what he looked like. He was surreal."

So, when producer Scott Rudin called in the spring of 1995 to offer him The Truman Show, Weir was not totally unfamiliar with Carrey's oeuvre. Rudin had purchased the script (for more than \$1 million) in late '93 but was taking his time picking a director. Rumor has it the hitmaker behind In & Out and The Firm had waved away such heavy hitters as Tim Burton, Terry Gilliam, Brian De Palma, Barry Sonnenfeld, and even Steven Spielberg (apparently, Akira Kurosawa and Stanley Kubrick were out of town that week).

"The trap with this movie was not to make it so overly designed that you couldn't take it seriously," says Rudin. "You needed a director who could give it naturalism and poetry, who could make it look real and unreal at the same time. Sort of like what Weir did with The Year of Living Dangerously, with all those puppets and Linda Hunt."

Rudin claims he never had anyone but Carrey in mind to play Truman (although Robin Williams' name may have come up). So he met with the actor on the set of Acc 2, and go figure: The internationally known, paparazzi-stalked, frequently gossiped about (yep



BANDIT CAMERA As Christof, Harris directs a show within the Show

### 

he's back with Lauren Holly) supercelebrity found something in the story he could relate to. "I've brought family pictures to Fotomat and had them end up in newspapers," says Carrey, 36. "Sold from the photo-processing lab. People are like, 'You can't arrest me, you can't sue me, so just because you're famous I'm going to make you feel like crap.' But I never signed anything that said I wasn't a human being anymore."

There was a problem, however. Carrey was already committed to two other projects: The Cable Guy and Liar Liar. It'd be at least a year before he could take Truman on-and a very long wait it would be. Throughout 1995, the trades were filled with reports of feuding between Rudin and Carrey's managers over a long-lingering Truman rewrite and Carrey's script approval. The situation got so ugly

that at one point Rudin and Carrey broke off talks. "It was just a blip," says Rudin. "He was out of the movie for like a weekend and then came back in."

After Carrey returned, the guy most responsible for Truman's rewrites—the original script was by Andrew Niccol, 34, an up-and-coming New Zealander with a budding specialty in paranoid hysteria (he also wrote and directed Gattaca)—was Weir, who went through about a dozen drafts before hitting on just the right mix of reality and poetry. A lot of Niccol's words managed to survive the process—he's responsible for those loopy product-placement spoofs in the film, with characters blurting out ad spots for "Mocha Cocoa" and "Kaiser Chickens" whenever Truman comes into camera range—but the director made some big changes. For instance: The city-size soundstage where Truman is imprisoned was originally supposed to look like New York, not a picturesque oceanfront village. Niccol still likes his idea: "I figured if you could fake it there, you could fake it anywhere," he says.

Weir and Carrey were a potentially prickly pairing. The softspoken Aussie is known as a strong, unconventional filmmaker. Carrey, on the other hand, has never been shy about flexing his star muscle, arriving on movie sets with his own stable of script doctors, even firing the director of Ace 2. As far back as the first Ace, the surprise 1994 blockbuster that launched Carrey's Jerry Lewis-onsteroids screen persona, he'd been putting himself in charge. ("The original script was more along the lines of Fletch," he says. "It took this pet detective a little too seriously, so I rewrote it.")

But once Carrey and Weir finally booked up to start filming-in late 1996, at the famously picture-buok-quaint planned Florida town of Seaside-the star and director had no trouble striking a power-sharing deal. Carrey lays it out "I didn't have much in-

volvement in the shaping of the story, but I was involved in creating Truman. Peter had an overall idea of what he wanted, but I went into the project just hoping that I'd get a chance to show more of my colors with the character."

Occasionally, Carrey showed too much color. Fortunately, Weir had plenty of experience working with comic overachievers (like Williams in Dead Poets Society). He just rolled the cameras and let Carrey be Carrey, sometimes incorporating the comedian's wacky improvs into the film-like Truman's sunshiny catchphrase, "Good morning, and in case I don't see you, good afternoon, good evening, and good night"-sometimes not. Then he'd ask Carrey to do another take without the jokes.

"There's a scene with Truman mowing the lawn," Weir offers as

an example. "Jim did this silent-comedy thing. He danced with the lawn mower, not unlike Fred Astaire dancing with the coatrack. But it was too much. It didn't fit with the tone of the picture. I told him, 'We must now have you puttering in the garden without doing anything funny.' And he said, 'Fine.'"

"We did lots of takes where I'd just make mad lunges and throw everything out there," Carrey remembers. "We played with lots that didn't get used. But Peter would say that because we'd done it, it'd still be in the film-in my eyes and my mind."

The supporting actors didn't get to dance with any lawn equipment, but they were allowed to concoct astonishingly detailed offscreen histories for their characters. "She was a child actress who never made it, and now she's really ambitious" was Linney's insight into playing Meryl, Truman's "on-air" wife. "Mostly she's into negotiating her contract. Every time she sleeps with him she gets an extra \$10,000," Noah

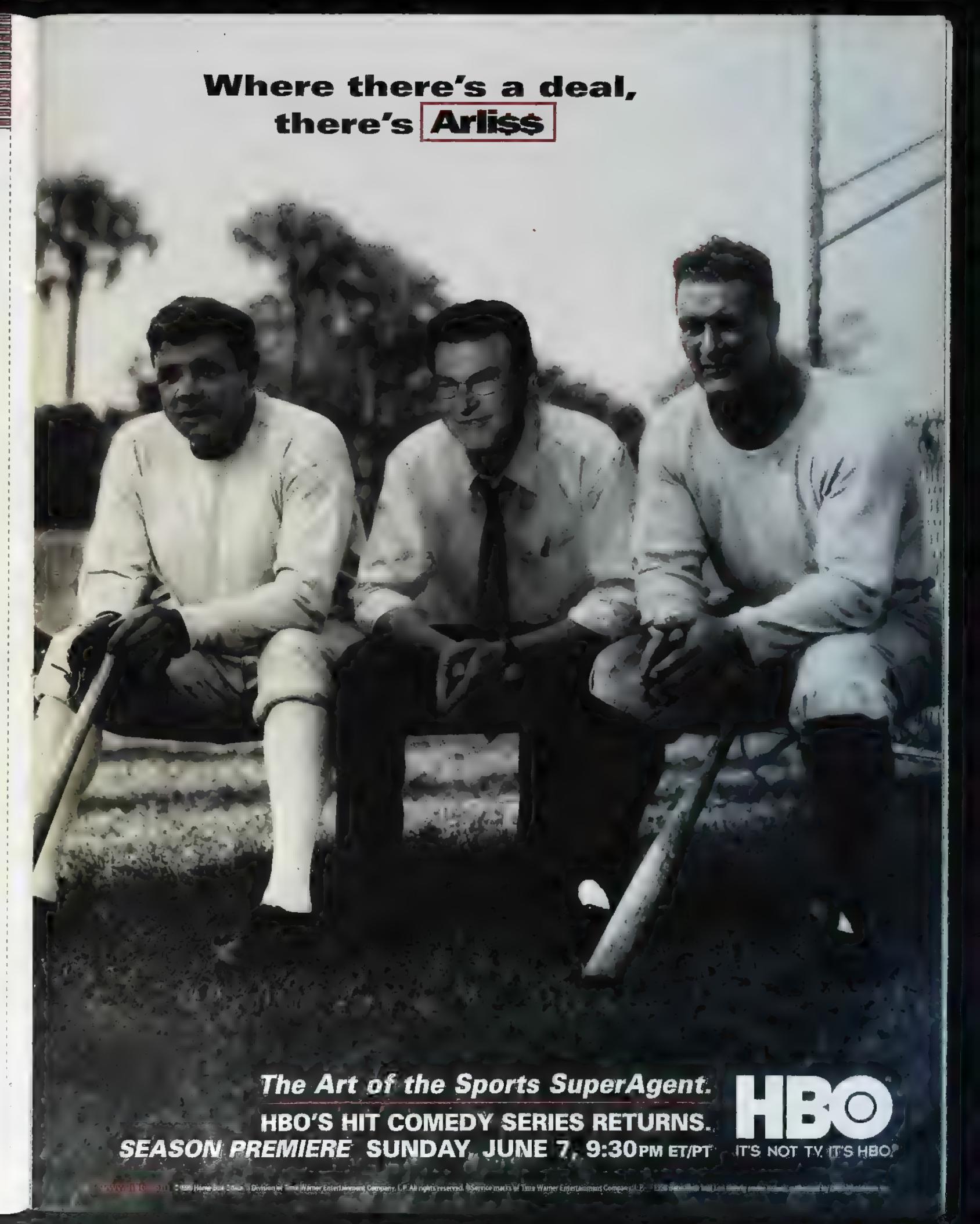
Emmerich (Cop Land), who plays Truman's best buddy, went with a bleaker back story: "My character is in a lot of pain. He feels really guilty about deceiving Truman. He's had a serious drug addiction for many years. Been in and out of rehab," (Emmerich would "rather not say" what sort of drugs.)

Whatever ideas Dennis Hopper cooked up for his role as Christof-the godlike creator of The Truman Show who directs the series from a control room hidden high in Seahaven's faux sky-they apparently didn't fly. Hopper was given the heave-hoafter only a day on the set, replaced by Ed Harris, "It was the most underwritten character in the script," Weir says, "and I just changed my thinking about it as we went along. Dennis was very gracious about it." Harris had only four days to prepare-plenty of time to whip up an elaborate back story of his own. "I couldn't





MARITAL MIST "An extra \$10,000" is what wife Linney gets for sex with Truman (caught in a one-man rain shower)



### 

really find a hook for the guy, so I asked Peter, 'What if he were a hunchback?' Some sort of deformity to show that he'd had a hard time in life. Peter laughed, but we did try it once."

BACK IN HOLLYWOOD, MEANWHILE, NOT EVERYONE WAS GETTING the joke. Some Paramount execs were uneasy about spending \$60 million on what they feared would be a yuk-free Carrey movie. The most expensive art film ever made, they nervously called it. Weir heard rumbles about the studio wanting the film to be funnier, more Ace-esque. One clueless suit actually took a meeting with the director to discuss product placement opportunities for *Truman*. "I just asked him if he'd read the script," Weir says, rolling his eyes.

These days, giddy Paramount execs are practically rolling around

naked in the piles of positive reviews, convinced they've hit on another Gump. They may have, but there is still one possible doomsday scenario: What if serious moviegoers don't want to see Jim Carrey and Jim Carrey fans don't want to see him get serious? The studio remembers what happened the last time Carrey tried that trick. Like Truman, the darkly comic Cable Guy was supposed to be a crossover vehicle to catapult the comedian into a weightier class of material, the sort that doesn't involve laxative gags. But it was not to be: Cable, which came out while Weir was retooling Truman's script, crashed in a flameout of scathing reviews and disappointing ticket sales (grossing only \$60 million in the U.S., a pittance for a Carrey flick).

"I'll tell you, I was nervous after Cable Guy," confesses Weir. "I'd heard about the lashing Jim had taken. My fear was that he'd lose his confidence or become bitter." Carrey, though, was philosophical

about the dud (he could afford to be; he got paid \$20 million). "Life goes in waves," he says. "I thought, okay, this one wasn't popular. Maybe the next wave will be better."

With some *Truman* TV spots bedecked with upscale critic quotes, and others that concentrate on goofy shots of Carrey's rear, Paramount is taking no chances. "There are two big differences from *The Cable Guy*," prays a Paramount exec. "First, *Cable Guy* was a dark picture. *Truman* isn't. And second, *Cable Guy* was a had movie, and *Truman* is a great one."

"PEOPLE SOMETIMES STOP ME IN THE STREET AND ASK ME TO do my favorite face. I always tell them, 'This one. The one I'm doing now That's my favorite.'"

The face Carrey is doing now isn't the mouth-morphing, rubberjawed phenom that's made him rich and famous. He's sitting in an L.A. photo studio doing a simple, pensive smile. Think of it as his latest characterization—Not-So-Dumb-After-All Guy—which also happens to be close to his true personality, "I'm a serious person who deals with pain through humor," he says, "All comics have a certain amount of self-loathing. That's why you become a comic. It's therapy. Working things out on stage."

Alrighty, then. Expect to see lots more of the newly serious Carrey (that's James Carrey) in the future, especially if Truman really does end up becoming Gump 2. And even if it doesn't, Carrey is still determined to wipe the silly grin off his face—at least in some of his movies. He'll even take pay cuts if necessary (he did Truman for a mere \$12 million). "To me, Clint Eastwood is the perfect example," he says. "He's a guy who knows what's commercial about himself. He gives them the commercial stuff. But in between he goes out on these tangents."

Carrey's next tangent is already lined up: the lead in Milos Forman's soon-to-shoot Andy Kaufman bio, a role coveted by every intense young actor in Hollywood (including Oscar nominee Edward Norton, who at one point was considered a shoo-in). To land the part, Carrey sent Forman a video of himself riffing as the late great *Tuxi* mechanic and mind-game artist. "I had I five-man crew, and we went through the house doing Kaufman's characters, playing bongos, quietly talking to the camera as Andy," Carrey describes it. "I used to do a Latka impression in my act, so I had that down."

Following the Eastwood plan, Carrey is also keeping an eye on the commercial. He isn't giving up *Dumb & Dumber*-style comedies anytime soon. Up shortly: a remake of the old Don Knotts film *The Incredible Mr. Limpet*, in which he'll play a man who turns into a fish. "But I'm sure because of the experience on *Truman*, there will be other colors in those movies, too," he says. "People

appreciate risks. Even when you create a character like Ace, it's a huge risk. You risk looking like a complete idiot. I was terrified every day making that movie. I thought, This has to reach some weirdos out there or I won't be able to show my face for five years.

"Basically," he goes on, "I'm a lot like Truman. I'm the sort of guy who wants to make everybody happy. I don't want even my worst enemies to be unhappy. That's sick, I guess. But that's who I am."

BACK TO OSCAR NIGHT, 1999, WITH THE CRITICS FINALLY wowed and a potential breakthrough on the horizon, does Carrey dare dream the impossible dream? "They don't give those things to me," he says flatly. "The thing that's always bugged me about the Oscars is that this whole medium was founded by comedians, guys who wanted to ham it up. But comedians aren't recognized enough by the Academy. I know the show is four hours, but they should add something for comedy. They could always lose a dance number."

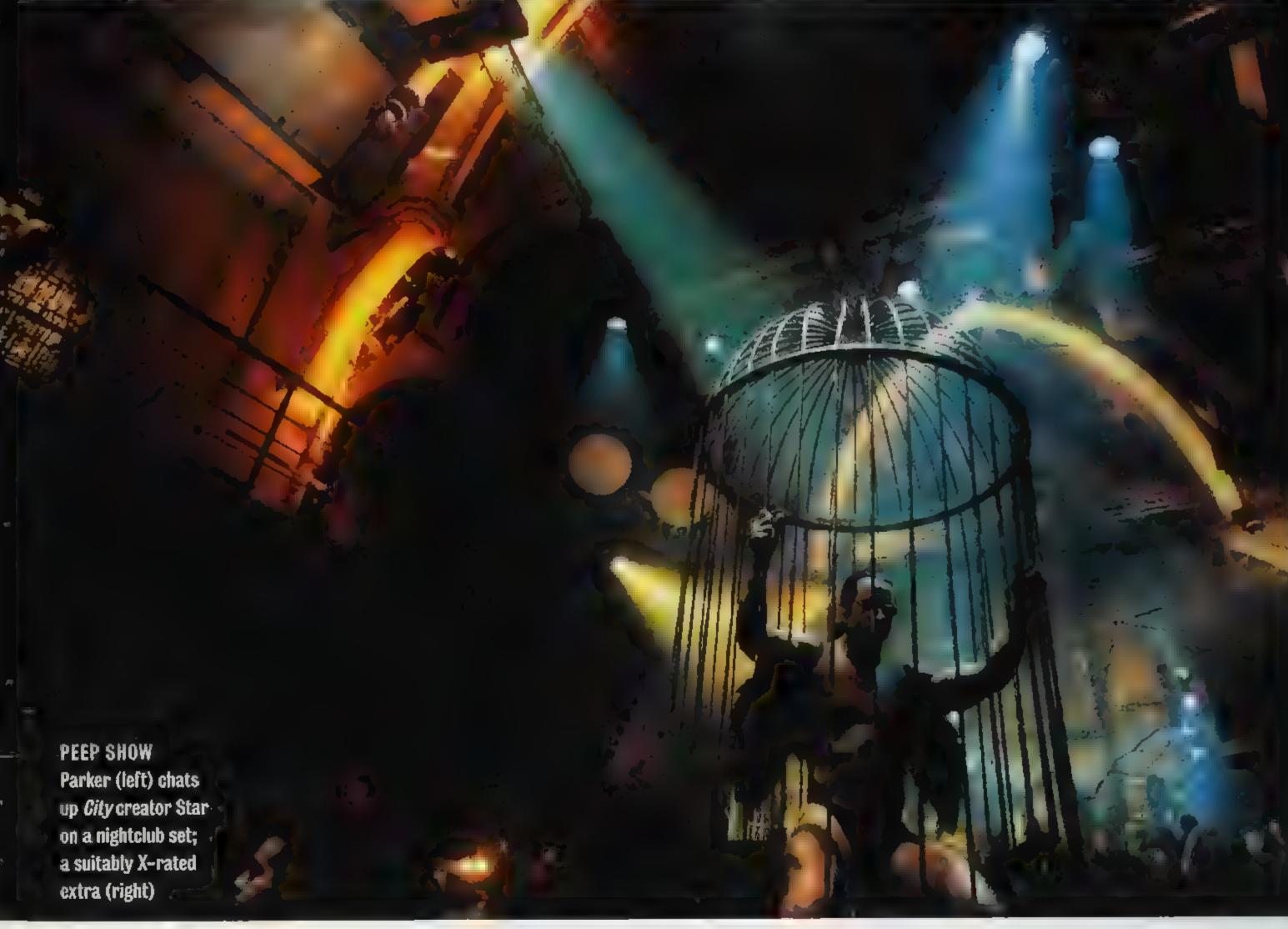
A small price to pay to gain a singing ass.



WEIR SCIENCE
Sometimes the director used Carrey's wild improve in the film, sometimes not







### SARAH JESSICA PARKER

peeks through the keyhole of New York City's down-and-dirty singles scene in HBO's racy new comedy series

BY A.J. JACOBS

Photographs by

ANTONIN KRATOCHVIL

### Let's Talk About

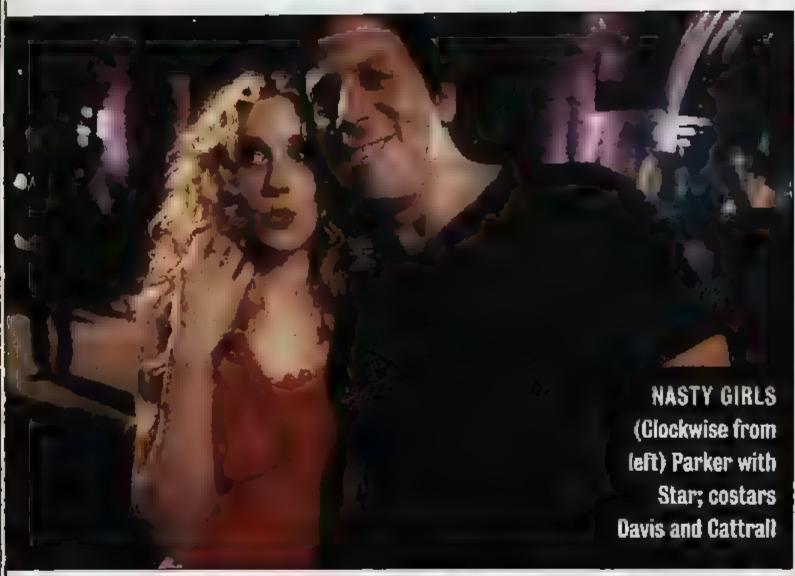
"size matters" double entendre thing? Well, here on the New York set of Sex and the City—HBO's upcoming comedy series—they're once again talking about matters of size. But at least this time they're not beating around the bush. This time it's the real deal. The scene: a smoky nightclub bathroom packed with four stiletto-heeled, celerythin bachelorettes. Suddenly, one bursts out with a teary confession—her boyfriend's anatomy is the size of a gherkin! Her gal pal commiserates. She once had a lover who brought to mind a miniaturegolf pencil. "I didn't know whether he was trying [to have sex with me] or erase me."

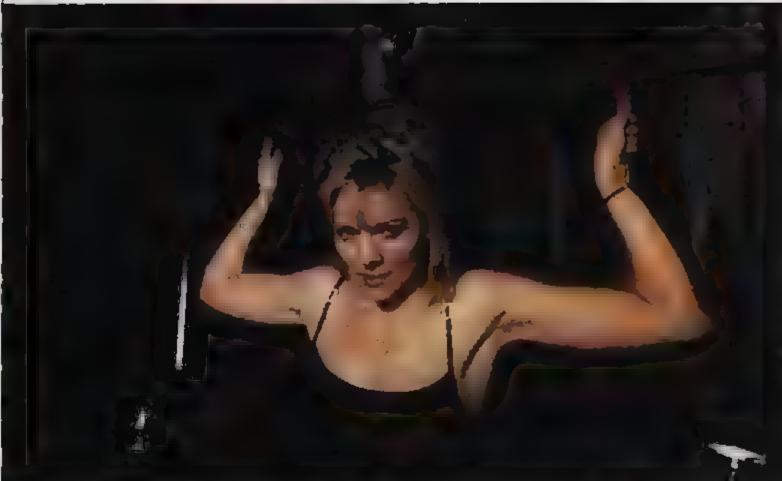
Through it all, Sarah Jessica Parker—playing the lead character, savvy New York City sex columnist Carrie—is the voice of reason, trying to caution her girlfriends against the cult of hugeness. This, from the wife of Matthew Broderick, star of that size-worshipping lizard movie? "Godzītla says 'Size does matter,' and my character's line is 'Size isn't everything,'" she reasons. "So it's not a total contradiction."

Phew! Crisis resolved.

Now the only size question involves Sex and the City's viewing audience. Loosely based on Candace Bushnell's knowing column in The New York Observer and brought to the tube by producer Darren Star—he of Melrose Place and Beverly Hills, 90210, as well as that grand belly flop Central Park West—Sex and the City follows the lust lives of four thirty-something power gals in the Big Apple. (Kristin Davis, Cynthia Nixon, and Kim Cattrall fill out the frolicsome four.)

But be warned, Red Shoe Diaries fans—you won't see all that much writhing and sweating. Instead, you'll hear talk. Lots of dirty talk. These women jabber with eyebrow-raising frankness about every subject under the Kama Sutra: oral





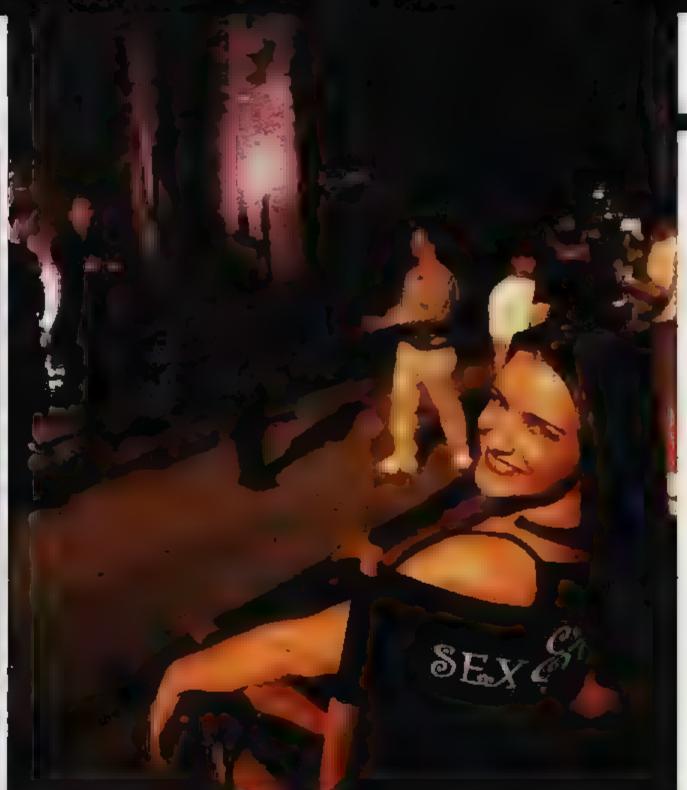
sex, threesomes, romance-killing farts, cradle robbing, and anal sex, to name a few.

"I'm slightly nervous," confesses Parker, 33, sipping a Starbucks coffee in her trailer a couple of weeks before the show's Saturday, June 6, debut (the next night, the show will begin a 12-week run on Sundays at 9 p.m.). "I don't know if people will find it saucy and smart or if they're going to say 'Well, this is just completely inappropriate. Who are these dirty awful people who would pollute our airwayes?"

Even Davis, a vet of the hormone-soaked Melrose Place, balked at a recent plotline about her boyfriend requesting anal sex. "I got a little mad when I got that script, but I got over it," she says. "I just told my mom she can't see that episode."

Mom's opinion aside, the actresses probably shouldn't lose too much sleep. In a nation that's already swallowed Howard Stern and MTV's Loveline, this series' aural sex won't incite much controversy (though HBO surely wouldn't mind a publicity-generating scandal or two).

Perhaps a more pressing question is. Will enough viewers care about the insular, haute-consure universe-with its bulimic models, society climbers, and "toxic bachelors"—that is the stuff of Bushnell's column? Parker thinks so: "I don't par-



ticipate in that world. These are the people you read about in The New York Times' style section and W magazine. But I find it intriguing."

And there's no doubt that she's having a heck of a time recreating it. In the series' 12 episodes, the happily married Parker can boast at least six on-screen conquests. "They're lovely men," she says. "I got Polaroids of all of them with no shirt on. It's great-all the men on the show are objectified."

For that, we can thank Star, a man who knows from sex objects. This is the guy who made heaps of cash from those skin-baring Aaron Spelling soap dynasties. But in 1995, he stumbled badly with CPW, the magazine-based sudser quickly snuffed by CBS. His spin? "By the time the show aired, the philosophy of the network had [changed]," says Star, 36. "They were no longer interested in going after younger viewers."

Post-CPW, Star took a quick break in the tony Hamptons, then dove into Sex, which he had optioned from friend Bushnell (they met when she wrote a magazine article about him). From the start, the producer wanted Parker in the lead, citing her "open quality important for a woman revealing a lot of secrets." Despite some interest from ABC, Star lit out to the safer ground of HBO, which gave him a budget comparable to that of a network sitcom (which can run \$900,000 per episode). Here, even if Sex flunks, it won't mean humiliation on the grand scale of CPW-if only because the cable network doesn't release ratings.

And, of course, the famously hands-off HBO (home to Real Sex and Dream On) will let Star write racy. Which, as Star points out, is actually a mixed blessing; there's no room for clever Seinfeld ian Master of Their Domain-type euphemisms. "The humor's not about how are you going to say 'bl-- job," he says, "Now that you can say 'bl-- job,' the humor has to come from a different place." As in, below the belt. ■



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Making the scene at the 51st annual Cannes Festival International du Film

by REBECCA ASCHER-WALSH & DAVID HOCHMAN

Photographs by LARRY LASZLO





THE RIVIERA RUNS THROUGH IT Oliver Platt, Tony Shalhoub, Lili Taylor, and a blond Stanley Tucci (1, from left), on the beach to promote *The Impostors*; Winona Ryder (2, center) joins fellow juror Chiara Mastroianni and Brett Brooks in enjoying Sharon Stone's impromptu AmFAR performance with Elton John (3); Emma Thompson (4, with John Travolta) hears no evil; Ralph Fiennes goes tête to tête with Eugene Onegin costar Liv Tyler (5); Jeanne Tripplehorn gives Hugh Grant a hand (6); Paul Auster (7, left) and Willem Dafoe make a Mira Sorvino sandwich; actor-director Roberto Benigni with wife and Life Is Beautiful costar Nicoletta Braschi (8); Jonathan Rhys-Meyer (9, right) gets a lift from Velvet Goldmine director Todd Haynes





THEY WERE SOMEWHERE around Cannes, on the edge of a craggy cliff, when the Bellinis began to take hold. Shortly after 3 a.m. at a point halfway through the festival, in the marbled, chandelier-lit opulence of the Hôtel du Cap, a high-class sloppiness set in, thanks to the hotel's world-famous \$25 pinkchampagne cocktails. As crystal began to crash to the floor, slipping from champagne-slick hands, Winona Ryder-taking in the scene—tucked her Keds beneath her and nestled under Gillian Anderson's protective arm on a banana-colored antique love seat, where they giggled like third graders. • In their line of vision, Ryder's ex-fiancé, Johnny Depp, sweltering in a

### Crème de la Crème

~ WINNERS ~

GOLDEN PALM Theo Angelopoulos' Eternity and a Day (Greece-Italy-France; no U.S. distributor yet) GRAND JURY PRIZE (2nd place): Roberto Benigni's Life Is Beautiful (Italy; Miramax) JURY PRIZE (3rd-place tie): Claude Miller's The Class Trip (France; no U.S. distributor yet) and Thomas Vinterberg's The Celebration (Denmark, October) **▼ GOLDEN CAMERA** (best first film): Marc Levin's Slam (U.S.; Trimark) BEST DIRECTOR John Boorman. The General (Ireland-U.K.; possible Sony Pictures Classics acquisition) BEST MALE PERFORMANCE Peter Mullan, My Name Is Joe (U.K.-Germany; no U.S. distributor yet)

and Natacha Regnier, The Dream Life of
Angels (France; Sony Pictures Classics)
ARTISTIC CONTRIBUTION Todd Haynes,
Velvet Goldmine (U.K.-U.S.; Miramax)
BEST SCREENPLAY Hal Hartley, Henry
Fool (U.S.; Sony Pictures Classics)
TECHNICAL CONTRIBUTION Cinematographer

Vittorio Storaro for Carlos Saura's Tango (Argentina-Spain; Sony Pictures Classics) YOUTH PRIZE Last Night (Canada-France, no U.S. distributor yet)

~ INTERNATIONAL CRITICS PRIZES ~

COMPETING FILM The Hole (Taiwan-France)
NONCOMPETING FILM Happiness
(U.S.; October)

ECUMENICAL JURY PRIZE Elernity and ■ Day

~ JURORS ~

Martin Scorsese (president),
British director Michael Winterbottom,
French director Alain Corneau,
Chinese director Chen Kaige,
rapper MC Solaar,
Cuban screenwriter Zoe Valdes,
and actresses Chiara Mastrolanni,
Lena Olin, Winona Ryder, and



leather jacket, chain-smoked hand-rolled cigarettes and whispered conspiratorially with director Terry Gilliam. Bruce Willis—fedora on his head, silver cross dangling from his neck, smirk on his face—strutted past Jeff Goldblum and Naomi Campbell and sauntered over to Cuba Gooding Jr. Meanwhile, Kiefer Sutherland ditched Rufus Sewell to greet Elizabeth Hurley, but stopped en route to kiss a bald, smiling Billy Zane.

Here at the 51st annual Cannes film festival, it was Hollywood business as usual. The jeans-wearing kings and

sneaker-clad queens of this celebrity chessboard shared gossip and sized one another up, while studio chiefs, producers, managers, and hangers-on determined the precise moment to go in for the kill. "Whoever needs a job the most is here walking in circles," said one agent. "Last year, it was Geena Davis. This year, I don't know...." And with that, Mira Sorvino took her third spin around the room.

As always, Cannes had as much to do with late-night schmoozing and relent-less, shameless posturing as with cutthroat dealmaking. Oh, yeah, and then there were the 500 or so movies shown around this ancient seaside town during these two frantic weeks, a few as part of the festival, most using Cannes as a marketplace to snag international distributors. So who could blame the Angelenos for ditching their personal trainers

and reaching for another Bellini? "Nothing can prepare you for the adventures along the Croisette," said first-time attendee Oliver Platt, here to promote Stanley Tucci's *The Impostors*, a caper that received mixed reviews. "It's fascinating because the glamour and history are side by side with all this

For all the revelry, corks weren't popping over the 22 films in competition, which centered on such marketable themes as prostitution, heroin addiction, pedophilia, and the Holocaust. (For a critical take, see page 50.) Ken Loach's



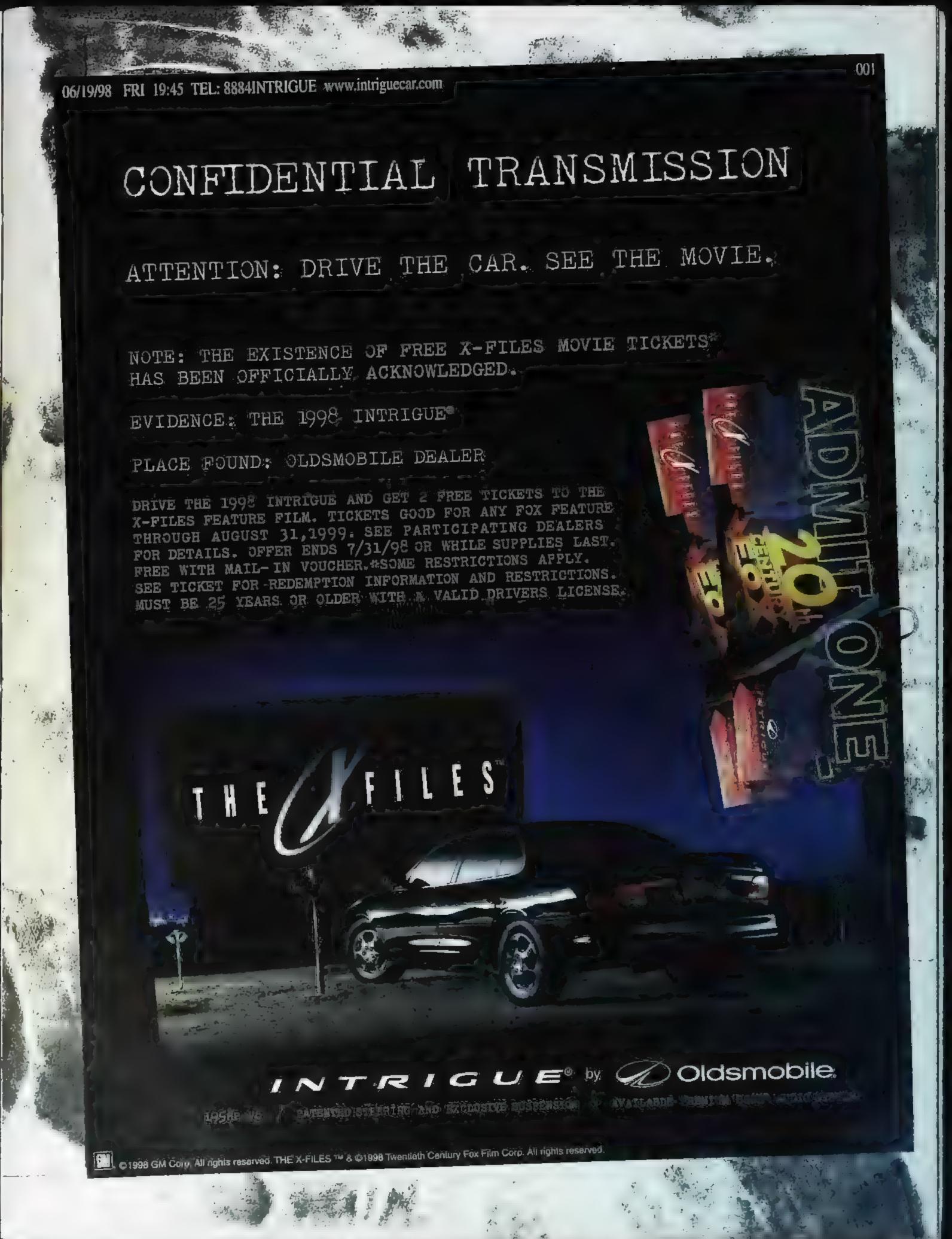


MOONLIGHTING BECOMES THEM Film fiends (1), including Bruce Willis (2), were out with a vengeance

My Name Is Joe dealt merely with alcoholism but proved unable to overcome major distributors' fears about its impenetrable Scottish accents, despite a warm audience reaction and a best-actor award for Peter Mullan. "You listen for the sound of seats going up," Loach said of the screening in the 2,300-seat auditorium of the Palais des Festivals. "We

were lucky—there weren't any." Katrin Cartlidge (Naked), the star of Claire Dolan, a dark American film about a call girl attempting to straighten out her life, recognized other warnings. "Coughing is the dead giveaway that people either love your movie or loathe it," she said. "I heard a lot of coughing."

The chasm between audience members' dislikes and jurors' likes was exemplified by Todd Haynes' Velvet Goldmine, a dreamlike fable about the glam-rock scene in '70s London. Although the film's press screening sounded like a hospital ward filled with







bronchitis victims, punctuated by a man yelling "Boooring!" from the balcony, the jury of actresses and directors led by Martin Scorsese was impressed enough to give writer-director Haynes an award for Best Artistic Contribution. And there was more conversation about Theo Angelopoulos' three-yearold boorish acceptance speech for Ulysses' Gaze than for his contribution to this year's festival, Eternity and a Day, an elegiac Greek drama about love and memory that won the Golden Palm. But audience and jurors alike agreed on Roberto Benigni's Life Is Beautiful, which Miramax, apparently spotting the next Il Postino, had paid an estimated \$7 million to distribute; it won sustained audience applause and picked up the Grand Jury Prize. On the other end of the spectrum was Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas, from which viewers fled en masse at virtually the same time it was playing to empty theaters Stateside. Loathing star Depp, who was lambasted here last year for his directorial debut, The Brave, was prepared: "This is not an easy audience-if they're not feeling something they want to feel, they walk out."

While juror Lena Olin insisted, "It's quality that matters, [not] what lan-



guage it's in," English-language filmsoutside of those that won awards (see chart on page 38)—seemed the kiss of death. A small wonder, given that the movies selected to be shown included Blues Brothers 2000, which was promoted with a lavish bash, Dark City, and the closing-night screening of Godzilla. Indeed, the festival's selection of U.S. films drew criticism from many Hollywood attendees. "There are times I think that the French have a distorted sense of humor about Americans," said Phoenix Pictures' Mike Medavoy, who cruised down to the Croisette to pick up a lifetime achievement award. "For one reason or another, French sensibilities are different, [and] they don't want to see American dominance."

But the Americans were undaunted: With few bidding wars and a general air of disappointment about the finished products, the goal quickly shifted to sealing deals with unknown talent (firsttime writer-director Kirk Jones, who, reportedly unable to afford the airfare, drove his film from London, left with a \$4 million deal from Fox Searchlight for the Irish comedy Waking Ned). And needless to say, many of the biggest deals were made at the ungodliest of hours. "How does tonight look for a meeting?" asked a man standing on the street, calendar in one hand, cell phone in the other. "How's 2 a.m.?" Actually, that's on the early side. And the sober side, as well. "Everyone's really wasted, which is good," said Zane. "It's like, 'I signed what? An all-midget musical?"

With the art taking a backseat to the deal, the festival's focus was mainly on



BAND DU SOLEIL Jurors Ryder, Martin Scorsese, and Sigourney Weaver (1); U.S. press watching *Seinfeld* sign off (2); *Goodbye Lover*'s Dermot Mulroney (3); Todd Solondz is *Happiness* personified (4); Mastroianni, daughter of Marcello and Catherine Deneuve (5), shows off her genes; Johnny Depp and Roman Polanski draw stares (8)

showing off. "Instead of having all my acquisitions people here," said Amir Malin, copresident of the newly formed Artisan Entertainment, "I should have had them back home, and brought my publicity team. Because what this is, is a press-release war. This is business unlike any other where the perception is greater than the reality. If the perception in people's minds is that you're an active player, that's very helpful."

Stamina also came in handy. "Between 3:30 and 4:15 this afternoon, we saw four deals," said Michael Barker, copresident of Sony Pictures Classics, which will distribute at least three of the winning films. "One was with a French guy next to the merry-go-round, one was up in a room at the Majestic, another was outside on the terrace, and then there was a quick one out in the parking lot."

Even with Yanks tossing around money, Cannes maintained a distinctly un-American ambiance. On the upper floors of the main hotels along the Croisette, where the straight-to-video market hawked films like German-made bikini-fest *Ballerman 6* and David Hasselhoff's *Legacy*, an international pack of producers and distributors raced

through the halls, desperate for bargains. One exec shouted: "It's James Woods. Woods! Woods! Not Wood! He's a name in America. Get it right!" And during a live broadcast in France, a TV interviewer asked Woody Allenish Happiness director Todd Solondz, "Is happiness having a good f---?" Clearly uncomfortable, he rose from his seat. "What kind of question is that?" he asked, heading away from the cameras. "You have a weird way with words."

Meanwhile, Don Johnson, in town to promote Roland Joffé's black comedy Goodbye Lover, was swamped by screaming fans; costars Mary-Louise Parker and Dermot Mulroney earned only polite nods. "I passed through town once," said Johnson, "but I was already famous, so I couldn't hang

out. Since I didn't have a film here, it would have been 'What's he doing here?' " (Fitting into that slot this year was U.N. secretary-general Kofi Annan, who showed up for a festival dinner and was mistaken for Morgan Freeman, and basketball coach Pat Riley, overheard at the AmFAR dinner discussing the six screenplays he has written.)

**FILM FEST** 

Cannes' all-embracing attitude rapidly progressed to a total disregard for subtlety. At a small beachside cocktail party to celebrate the production of Roman Polanski's next film, *Ninth Gate* (which stars Depp), Sorvino darted



party and made a stunning entrance into the cauldron of flashbulbs. With the female lead of Ninth Gate still uncast, Sorvino marched up to Depp with cameras clicking, took off her shoes to even out the height difference, and made what seemed a public plea for the role. "Mira was dying to do it, and it was kind of obvious at the party," said Malin, whose company is producing the film. "She was calling four times a day to set up a meeting." (Insists a spokesman for Sorvino, "She's friendly with Roman

and her calling him frequently doesn't necessarily mean it had anything to do with wanting the role.") What Sorvino didn't know was that on the second day of the festival, Polanski met with Lena Olin, who accepted the part immediately.

Luckily for Sorvino, there were plenty of other events to at-

tend, from the glitzy fund-raiser AmFAR held at the Moulin de Mougins restaurant, where Sharon Stone auctioned off hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of baubles and Elton John and Ringo Starr played their first-ever duet ("Hope I can remember the words," Ringo whispered before launching into "Twist and Shout"), to the MTV-Godzilla bash and the Armageddon fete, complete with Armageddon: The Virtual Ride. Scoring tickets to these events proved more difficult than sealing a deal. "There is no Godzilla party," a harried woman at Sony's invitation desk told m reporter.



"Besides, we have no more tickets anyway." And for the Velvet Goldmine shindig, where 400 gathered to see Bryan Ferry and Toni Collette party, invitees received invitations to the invitations. Overwhelmed, Lulu on the Bridge's Willem Dafoe sat in a rooftop apartment pouring sand out of his shoe onto the Persian carpet. "It's nonstop parties. Nonstop craziness. Nonstop press. Just nonstop nonstop not stopping."

But oh, how wonderful that pace can be. "I know complaining is chic," said Hugh Grant, who did a 24-hour driveby to promote his upcoming gangster romp, Mickey Blue Eyes, "but I'm sorry I can't stay longer." Back at the Du Cap, Grant and his coconspirators were making the best of their all-expensespaid jaunt on the Riviera. At 4 a.m., the guests began to slink away, trailing their jackets and ball-gown trains on the floor behind them. Sewell, who'd had enough of the scene-"There's a certain carnivorousness that starts to eat at you"—had headed to a local bar for a beer. But for the hardcore Bellini belters, it was time to herald the day with a final toast. "The sunrise is faster in this town than any other I've ever encountered," Zane said remorsefully. "The sky is beginning to get pink, and it's like, 'But I just finished my afterdinner mint!' Then you know it's time to start again."

Heard you got the part. Let's do lunch. Kiss kiss. Luv ya babe!





Timex and Motorola introduce the first full-text message pager in a watch

## Rube Tube

Jim Carrey lives for TV in the dazzling fantasy The Truman Show. by Owen Gleiberman

STARRING

Jim Carrey

Ed Harris

RATED PO

102 MINUTES

TRUMAN BURBANK (Jim Carrey), the hero The Truman of Peter Weir's beautifully sinister and transfixing entertainmentage daydream The Truman Show (Para-

maculate as a tropical post-

leaves his gilded suburban home, which looks like one of those New Age gingerbread office

island community called Sea- | insurance salesman, Truman | knowing star of an intricately | timacy. His wife is a '90s Donhaven that's as surmy and im- a swirls through lanes of traffic a rigged TV series, a voycums- and Reed (Linney's overly synnearly surreal in their civility. The epic beamed 24 hours a day — thetic character is actually the card. Each morning, he says | whisks past perfectly stacked | into homes all over the world goodbye to his perky, beaming | rows of interchangeable magwife (Laura Linney) and Lazines, and makes small talk—are overseen by Christof (Ed. AFFECTION All eyes are on Carrey

with the locals, who are as | Harris), the show's ominous chipper as the droids in a candy-bar commercial. Have in his booth like a network Big lel universe? Or is Seahaven, , before him. The streets and with its programmed-cheery | buildings of Seahaven are sets settings and programmed- ! (the sun and moon are eleccheery people, its meticulous, I tronically operated light Magnitte-goes-to-the-mall look ; shows), and the citizens are of the '90s melting into the '50s | round-the-clock actors, each and back again, the place equipped with a tiny camera. America is fast becoming?

buildings that began to fake—not a town at all but a His buddy (Noah Emmerich), go up about a decade | gigantic domed television stu- | who regularly arrives to share ago. Arriving down- | dio, where Truman has spent mount), lives in a storybook | town, where he works as an | his entire 30 years as the un- 'bonding to create an ersatz in-The events of Truman's life THE OBJECT OF THEIR

creator-visionary, who sits up we entered some creepy paral- | Brother, molding everything Even Truman's family and Actually, Seahaven is a | friends aren't what they seem. ha six-pack, uses macho-guy

film's one flaw), and his memory of losing his father in a drowning accident is like a "haunting" TV-movie tragedy. Everywhere Truman looks, he's being filmed, observed, scrutinized; the whole world is watching him. Only he doesn't know it. The reason the show is a hit is that although everything surrounding Truman is an illusion, his reactions are innocently, and utterly, real.

The paranoid ingeniousness

of The Truman Show brings to

mind David Lynch directing a

smiley-faced 1984—that, or Invasion of the Body Snatchers updated to the era of Jerry Springer and The Real World. The film takes off from a culture—ours—that erases privacy by turning reality into television and television into reality. That said, if The Truman Show were just a Twilight Zone satire of life in the age of | fourth wall—to become, for ultra-media, it might not have the first time, himself. had much resonance. What makes the film a dizzy, transporting experience is the way that Weir, working from Andrew Niccol's nimbly fanciful screenplay, allows us direct access to the eerie virtual realiportrayed as m hyper-clear dream of our own homogeeverything from catchphrases to love dictated by the prerogatives of corporate central.

Jim Carrey has always been naturally stylized, a man gleefully unleashing his id and watching it bounce around the room. Here, he hasn't let go of that stylization, exactly. He's sculpted it down, reducing himself to the slightly gawky mannerisms of a doofus everyman domesticated beyond his powers, literally raised to be a character on a TV show. As it dawns on Truman that there are vast forces mucking with his life. Carrey's happy smirk

curls into a snarl of rage, and he inspires dynamic feelings of audience revolt. What Truman is discovering and fighting, the surreal sense that everything in the world revolves around him, is really the core aesthetic of TV commercials ("This Bud's for you!"), now turned into a madhouse threat. A consumer-age Walter Mitty, he longs to escape, to go to Fiji and reunite with the bewitching coed (Natascha McElhone) he once, for a moment, loved. Unbeknownst to him, she was an actress on The Truman Show who tried to shake free of her role (and was hauled off by the network fascists). Carrey uses his timing and his ironic sincerity to fuse us to Truman's desperation, turning him into a postmodern Capra hero. We're dying for Truman to break through Seahaven's

Weir gently tweaks the viewers who gather at a bar, or over a pizza, to tune into Truman's latest exploits. Those viewers, of course, are us. Watching the movie, we're inside The Truman Show and ty of Truman's world, which is | outside it at the same time. We feel the tug of its drama as surely as anyone on screen, nized, theme-parked lives, with | yet we're never allowed to forget that for Truman, romance, friendship, even his own memories are a prefab series of events—a behavior-modification experiment drawn from the situational language of television. It may well have taken a clown genius like Jim Carrey to play someone who wakes up to the notion that his whole life has been a ghostly pantomime. In its ominously witty way, The Truman Show is really asking, What happens to our experience when all we want to be is what we see? That may be the first essential question of the 21st century. A

# REELWARRE

This week in Hollywood by Anita M. Busch

■ THEY'RE BAAACK With Seagram's \$10.6 billion acquisition of PolyGram announced on May 21, three familiar, unwanted faces have returned to Seagram's Universal Studios. First is Rob Reiner and Castle Rock Entertainment. In 1996, MCA/Universal negotiated to acquire the company behind A Few Good Men, but after the studio backed away from the deal, Castle Rock eventually signed a three-year agreement with PolyGram and Warner Bros. Second is Ivan Reitman (Six Days, Seven Nights), whose Northern Lights production company has been housed in a \$4 million office on the Universal lot. After the new Seagram-appointed regime would not renew his deal, Reitman joined with ex-MCA vice chairman Tom Pollock and In February signed a deal at Poly-Gram. Finally, there's Pollock, who resigned his exec post soon after Seagram took over and who hired Casey Silver, now Universal Pictures chairman—meaning, technically, Pollock now reports to his former protégé. Hopefully, for this trio's sake, Seagram will soon find a buyer for PolyGram's feature-film unit.

■ WEB SIGHT After a five-year legal wrangle, now comes word that James Cameron could be waiting a lot longer before Spider-Man's film rights become available. Attorneys for Marvel Comics want to move the case from Los Angeles to a Delaware court-where the company is in bankruptcy hearings. Meanwhile, lawyers for the other parties involved-MGM/UA (with Indie producer 21st Century), Viacom, and Columbia TriStar Home Video—are trying to move into a mediation in L.A. to settle the dispute out of court. The problem is, no mediator can be agreed upon. "We'd like to have the matter resolved by the Judge who is overseeing all of Marvel's assets," says Marvel attorney Carole Handler. "Spider-Man is an important asset and...we believe that Marvel owns the rights." Cameron

did not return calls.

THE RIGHTS STUFF Spidey and Cameron







### **Boogie Nightly**

A club culture hustles to an end in The Last Days of Disco, but not without sex, drugs, and great talk

WHIT STILLMAN'S The Last Days of Disco (Gramercy) is about the demise of the nightlife scene the way his 1994 film, Barcelona, is about that stylish Spanish city. Which is to say, on the surface, this discursive drama concerns a certain genteel population of New York City in the early '80s-well-bred, college-educated young women who work as low-paid corporate drones by day (subsidized by parents, marking time until society-approved marriage), and who, with their preppy beaux, transform themselves into high-rolling club kids by night. And it re-creates with tender rue the so-so old days of loud music, loose drugs, doormen standing sentinel behind velvet ropes, as well as the thrill of being a part of the trendy scene, however vacant and soul-deadening revisionist cultural history (and upcoming films like Velvet Goldmine and 50) reminds us the scene

But as with the politically ambitious *Barcelona* and his sharp first comedy of manners,

1992's Metropolitan, Stillman employs his story in the service of something deeper and much less trendy: a thoughtful study of decency and sin, loyalty and sex, friendship and socioeconomics, as manifested by articulate, attractive WASPs much like himself. But it's no tedious sermon, not with

About Nothing, doing a spotless American accent) and Chloe Sevigny (Kids) as Charlotte and Alice, a couple of publishing-house underlings who

share a shabby postgraduate Manhattan
apartment and meircle
of disco-loving friends.
Charlotte is an unhappy, competitive confidence wrecker, disguised as an "honest"
friend; Alice is more in-

WASPs much like himself. But it's no tedious sermon, not with Kate Beckinsale (of *Much Ado* Leonard) than to one of sub-

DANCE HALL DAZE Leonard, Sevigny, and Beckinsale pas de trois

stance (MacKenzie Astin).

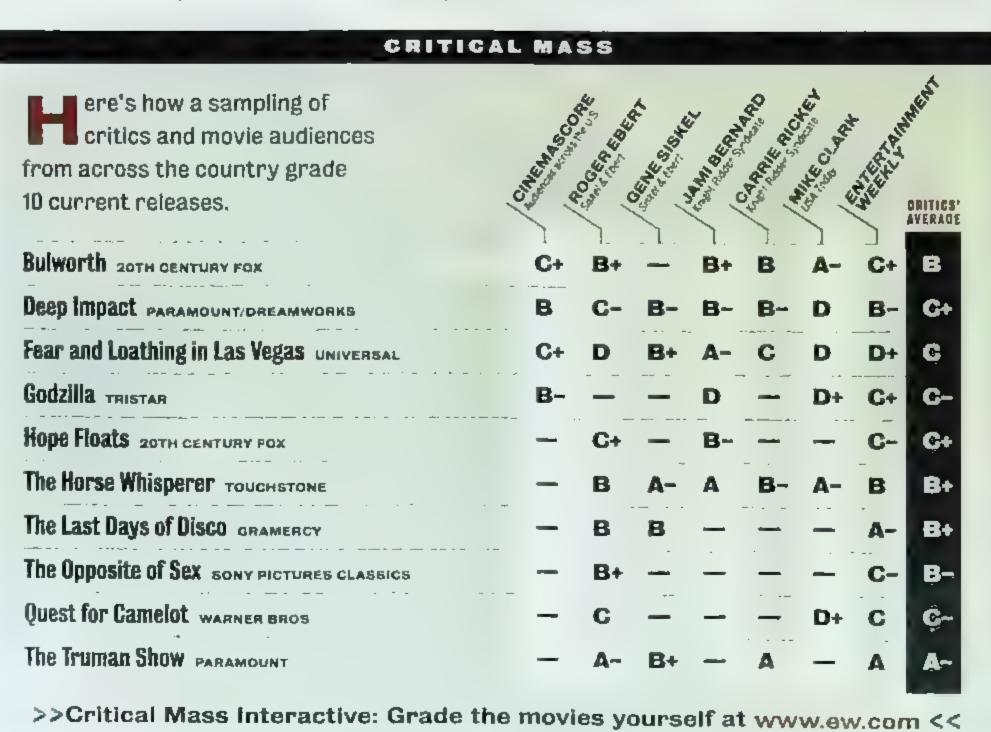
The fetching cast (including Jennifer Beals as a histrionic girlfriend), while a long way from Gwyneth and Matt stature, nevertheless reflects Stillman's enhanced status as an established indie talent. But Stillmanites are likely to be even more pleased by the reappearance of some of his regulars, including Christopher Eigeman, who link this tender morality play to the filmmaker's previous works (and, who, for good measure, make references to Barcelona). Stillman's gang may be

maturing precariously close to middle age, but it's lovely to know the important pleasures of conversation and intellectual discussion endure. The bonding patterns of these specimen boomers

specimen boomers
only appear ordinary. In fact,
they're as entrancing as anything on the disco dance floor.

-Lisa Schwarzbaum

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Disco
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Chioe Sevigny
Kate
Beckinsale
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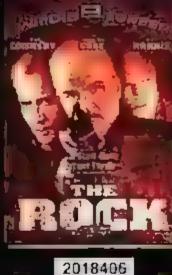
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BATMAN & ROBIN (1997)

**JERRY MAGUIRE** 



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(1996)	2005700
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### Toast of the Coast

At the 51st Cannes festival, the films were what they always are-only different. by Lisa Schwarzbaum

IT'S A CANNES DEBATE as traditional as the procession of stars ascending redcarpeted steps each evening: How does this year's festival compare with last year's, with that of 10 years ago, with the golden year of 19\_\_, when (insert film here) wowed the erowd/scandalized the audience/announced the arrival of a new genius? The ritual response is, Not as good/consistent/(insert adjective here). And, mon Dien, there was plenty of comparison going on at the 51st annual Festival Inmuch pomp and celebrity was a and Godzilla is Gallie-Ameria, what we learned:

poured into last year's halfcentury anniversary celebration. (And, honestly, what civilian has seen Shohei Imamura's very nice 1997 Golden Palm prizewinner The Eel?)

But this reflexive perception that some other year was always better, some other film by director X, Y, or Z was always stronger, is not the point at all. Cannes is not about what's best or what's next. It's not about the state of Cannes-Hollywood relations (although, Bulworth and The Truman ternational du Film de | Show this year and the inclu-Cannes, especially since so | sion of Blues Brothers 2000

can drollery at its most myst fying). What Cannes is-what it's always been-is the world's most fascinating, idiosyncratic sampler of what's on international filmmakers' minds this year, in this moment, at this point in their ca-

reers as storytellers. Some are established. Some are new, Most will find a U.S. home for their work only in art-house theaters-if at all. For 12 days, though, they have our full atten-

tion. We parade from screening to screening (past street vendors hawking posters of Leonardo DiCaprio, past Europeans carrying little peez Louise, the absence of I dogs so pampered they're spared the chore of walking). We sit in the dark, open to suggestion. This year, this is

GANNES GOODS (1) Bale (left) in Velvet Goldmine, (2) Life Is Beautiful's Nicoletta Braschi and Benigni, (3) Happiness' Elvin and Baker

■ EVERY UNHAPPY FAMILY IS unhappy in its own way. But the trendiest of them feature sexual turmoil as a plot device. Todd Solondz, the astonishingly assured son of the Garden State whose 1996 Welcome to the Dollhouse nailed the agony of suburban-girl adolescence with ferocious aplomb, advances his bitterly black, tragicomic point of view with Happiness, a disturbing portrait of an extended middle-class New Jersey family whose veneer of everydayness gets ripped away, exposing psychic carnage involving-among other activities-pedophilia, stalking, and graphic masturbation. And some of the most shocking activity is the content of conversation. I can't recall a simple talk between a father (Dylan Baker, in a daring performance) and young son (newcomer Justin Elvin) ever being so upsetting; it's only Solondz's successful tonal tightrope walk (and passionate performances from a strong cast, including Philip Seymour Hoffman and Cynthia Stevenson) that keeps this riveting production from

disintegrating into sensationalism. Look forward to a ratings fight and a flurry of oped chatter before this succès de scandale is released.

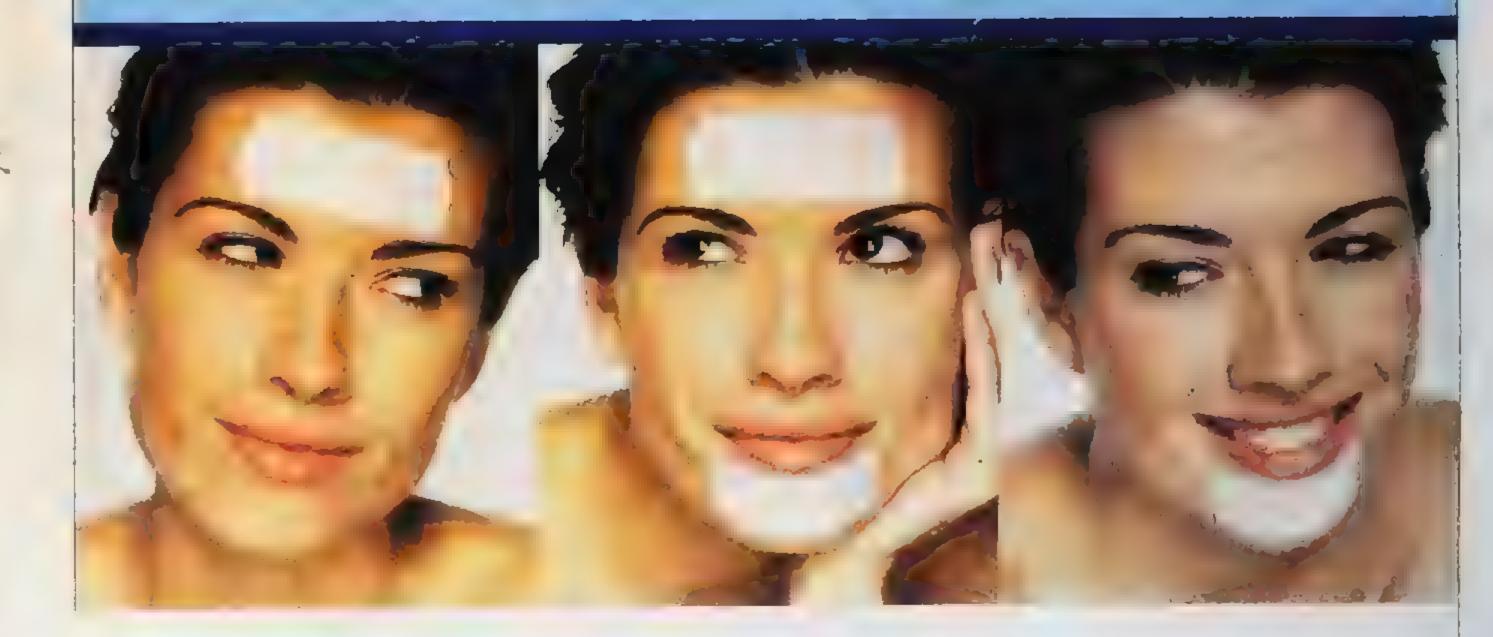
Nasty family secrets also propel Festen, a lively, exotic-

> looking exercise in character development through kinetic motion from 29-year-old Thomas Vinterberg—himself a subscriber to the Dogma 95 manifesto of fellow Dane Lars Von Trier (more on that in a minute). In Class Trip, French director Claude Miller cap

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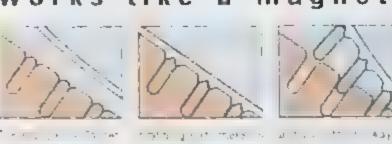




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tures from a child's-eye view the feeling of peril at the hands of a father. French provocateur François Ozon makes family dysfunction one big crude joke in Sitcom. In Patrice Chereau's clunkily titled Those Who Love Me Can Take the Train, n death in the

family is a good time to have it out with the relatives.

■ SPECIAL EFFECTS are for sissies. Vinterberg and his mentor, Von Trier—who brought Cannes to its feet two years ago with Breaking the

Waves—came up with their nuttily strict Dogma 95 principles in response to what they saw as artistic decadence caused by too much directorial ego, too many technical shortcuts. Instead, they envision a purist's utopia of technical minimalism—even if that minimalism—even if that minimalism requires as much fancy

formal footwork as any Holly-wood production. Central to the conceit is the handheld camera, which Von Trier pushes beyond even Homicide's seasickness-inducing TV limits in The Idiots, an outrageous-unto-grating trickshow about a group of commune dwellers who enjoy

acting mentally impaired—they call it "spazzing out"—for the thrill of something or other. Poking fun at society? I'm not convinced that *The Idiots* is anything more than a private joke. I am convinced, however,

that **The General**, from British master John Boorman (*Hope and Glory*), is a kind of black-and-white masterpiece, the beautifully composed, simply told story of Irish criminal Martin Cahill, brilliantly played by Brendan Gleeson. (The jury was convinced too; Boorman won the prize for Best Director.



THE MILLENNIUM IS COMING; let's stay home and brood. With Last Night, his cool and eerie meditation on the end of the world, Canadian Don McKellar provides a fresh, quiet alternative to this summer's death-by-asteroid Hollywood blowouts. In The Hole—a slow, odd Taiwanese tale from Tsai Mingliang, suitable for framing on The X-Files—the year 2000 brings unceasing rain. American-author-loved-by-the-

French Paul Auster stumbles painfully with his solo directing debut, Luiu on the Bridge, starring Harvey Keitel as a mopey jazz musician and Mira Sorvino as his mopey muse. In The Dream Life of Angels, Erick Zonca's first feature, the filmmaker shows how hard it is to be a cute, directionless French girl in this lousy world. Cannes regular Theo Angelopoulos (Ulysses' Gaze) ponders death with beautiful shots strung out to numbing length in the truth-

fully titled Eternity and a Day. (Nevertheless, he won the Golden Palm, possibly so that the dour Greek director could light a cig and sigh, "Finally.") ■ IT'S THE '70S, BABY. NO Cannes competition film was more eagerly anticipated than Volvet Goldmine, a fable from fiercely inventive Todd Haynes (Safe) about the rise and fall of the British glitter-rock empire, starring Ewan McGregor, Christian Bale, Toni Collette, and Jonathan Rhys-Meyer. No film was more ambitiously, unsteadily shaped, either, with its flights of wild brilliance arrested by blotches of effect-heavy vamping. Across the ocean, meanwhile, Tamara Jenkins remembers 1976 for one Jewish teenage suburban girl in Slums of Beverly Hills, a quirky, personal, piquant comedy starring Natasha Lyonne, Marisa Tomei, and a particularly affecting Alan Arkin.

■ NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE

power of a woman's movie. Ken Loach's My Name Is Joe (for which Peter Mullan won the best-actor prize) is an effective ode to Alcoholics Anonymous, the love of a good woman, and the distressing incomprehensibility of the Scottish accent. Dance Me to My Song, from Australian Rolf de Heer (The Quiet Room), moved many but set off my uh-oh-we're-being-used alarms with its story of a spastic woman and the love of a good man. Waking Ned, a thoroughly charming, wee tale of lottery fever among geezers in ■ tiny Irish village, stands to become a small international hit. (There's even a bit of the full monty, albeit involving some very wrinkled equipment.)

■ FINALLY, THIS YEAR'S FESTIval was dominated by the slick
wiles of Roberto Benigni's Life
is Beautiful, a comedy set in a
Nazi concentration camp. Haha, n'est-ce pas? While Aprile—
a sharply witty, sophisticated

personal/political commentary from fellow countryman Nanni Moretti—was dismissed as "slight," this calculated mush, about a guileless Jewish Everyman (Benigni) who keeps his son's spirits up by convincing him that torture and genocide are a game, won the popular Italian comedian the Grand Jury Prize. Part Robin Williams (the mugging), part Jerry Lewis (the cloying pathos), part Charlie Chaplin (with a not-so-

subtle debt to *The Great Dictator*), and all showman, Benigni just about stood on his head courting the movie crowd both on screen and off. While other filmmakers looked inward, contemplating the complexities of life at the end of the 20th century, Benigni re-created the Holocaust with all the escapist charm of a warm '30s comedy.

This too is what we talk about when we talk about Cannes.



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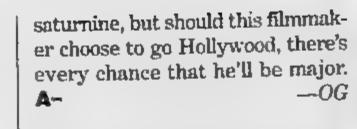
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## The Week

### New Releases

THE OPPOSITE OF SEX (Sony Pictures Classics, R) The first feature directed, as well as written, by Don Roos is free of the synthetic bigstudio falseness that marked his scripts for Boys on the Side and Single White Female. This one traffics in a different kind of falseness-the smug, coyly blasphemous, aren't-we-dysfunctional family-disaster chic that has become the most annoying trend in independent filmmaking since the Tarantino wannabes. Roos does have a knack for show-off zingers, and it's fun to hear them pop out of the mouth of Dedee (Christina Ricci), an imperiously bratty 16-year-old vamp. Having seduced her gay half-brother's buff lover (Ivan Sergei), she finds herself pregnant and marries the now converted "homo." The aggressive implausibilities escalate from there. Roos serves up twisted suburban farce, media scandal, even death with the same glib, airless detachment. He spreads attitude like margarine, so that performers as disparate as the feisty Ricci and the glum Martin Donovan are straitjacketed in his generic bitchery. C-

INSOMNIA (First Run/Castle Hill, unrated) You might expect a homicide thriller from Norway to be chilly, brooding, full of elegant intimations of psychosexual pathology. The surprise of Erik Skjoldbjærg's dazzlingly accomplished first feature is that it draws those very qualities out of a scenario rich with Hitchcockian trickiness and manipulative finesse. Stellan Skarsgård, the strapping, robustly earthy costar of Breaking the Waves and Good Will Hunting, creates an entirely different mood of prehensile anxiety as Jonas Engström, a Swedish police detective who journeys to Norway to help solve the gruesome murder of a teenage girl. When Jonas, pursuing his suspect through a foggy fjord, accidentally shoots and kills his own partner, he attempts to cover up his guilt by spinning an increasingly threadbare web of evasions and lies, which ultimately lead him into bartering communion with the killer himself. Skjoldbjærg's fusion of eroticized moodiness and delicately unfolding chessboard logic recalls PBS Prime Suspect and movies like Michael Mann's Manhunter and Paul Verhoeven's The Fourth Man. -OG Insomnia is occasionally a bit too



UNDER THE SKIN (Arrow, unrated) The psychological connections between sex and death have rarely been so starkly-and so erotically-explored, nor so fearlessly portrayed. As Iris, a high-strung single woman who, in the wake of her mother's death, tries to displace grief with a frenzy of casual sex, Samantha Morton (previously seen here only in British TV imports) gives a performance of astonishing power, she bursts into view with the kind of magnetism Emily Watson brought to Breaking the Waves. British writer-director Carine Adler understands that sex serves as language as well as urge, letting the body speak when words are blocked: Iris' compulsion leads to a better relationship with her married, pregnant, stable sister (Claire Rushbrook), a healing that Adler establishes with particular sensitivity. Her strong feature debut is sometimes painful, but even at its most rawly intimate, it never cheats into exhibitionism or pride in its own daring. A

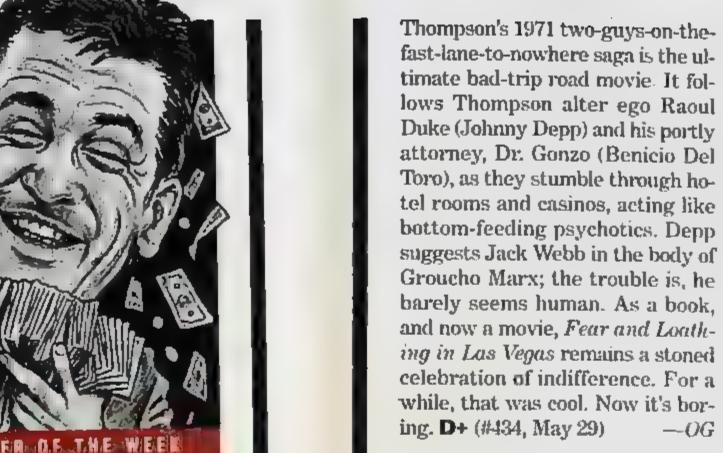
I GOT THE HOOK-UP (Dimension, R) A pair of inner-city con artists named Black and Blue steal a vanload of cellular phones and try to make some fast cash by "hooking up" the neighborhood. Soon, everyone from the local club gangster to the FBI comes down on their asses. That's pretty much all there is to watch-unless, of course, you count the raggedy, degraded sniping that threatens to turn the entire movie into a protracted streetcorner hustle. It remains to be seen whether Master P, the young hiphop entrepreneur who wrote, financed, and costars in this noisy free-for-all (as Black, he wears gold teeth and a wool ski cap but projects the cushiony savoir faire of ... a young hip-hop entrepreneur), can succeed in packaging rowdy, illtempered one-upmanship as the latest depressing style of blaxploitation. The mood of sour misanthropy may come off as a be-hardor-get-crushed vision of life on the street, but that doesn't make it insightful (or pleasurable). **C-** —OG



OPPOSITE ATTRACTS For Donovan and Lisa Kudrow, ignoring is bliss

### In Theaters

BULWORTH (R) Warren Beatty directed and stars in this tease of satire about a Democratic senator, Jay Billington Bulworth, who is so fed up with the complacent falsity of American politics that he suffers a breakdown and begins to rap the truth. There are some scathingly funny moments in the first 40 min-



### **Robert De Niro**

A Paris civil court has: awarded the actor around \$13,000 in his suit ∙against a French news⊸ paper that linked him to a prostitution ring. The daily France-Soir was found guilty of defamation and invasion of privacy.

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### Gérard Depardieu

As De Niro's 1900 costar reportedly recovers. from motorcycle-crash injuries, he may face a possible Jail term for allegedly driving 90 mph while under the influence of alcohol. Ahhh, Paris in: the springtime.

utes, but then the film all but abandons its scabrous detonation of gridlock polities. It becomes a rainbling burlesque of the image of Warren Beatty as aging homeboy. C+ (#433, May 22)

DEEP IMPACT (PG-13) Will a comet destroy Earth before a newswoman (Téa Leoni) makes peace with her divorced parents? Meet a new breed of summer flick; the woman's action thriller, in which scenes of speed, suspense, and destruction serve as testosterone infusions between the nurturing of relationships. **B-** (#432, May 15) — *LS* 

FEAR AND LOATHING IN LAS VEGAS (R) Terry Gillam's stridently outrageous adaptation of Hunter S

fast-lane-to-nowhere saga is the ultimate bad-trip road movie. It follows Thompson alter ego Raoul Duke (Johnny Depp) and his portly attorney, Dr. Gonzo (Benicio Del Toro), as they stumble through hotel rooms and casinos, acting like bottom-feeding psychotics. Depp suggests Jack Webb in the body of Groucho Marx; the trouble is, he barely seems human. As a book, and now a movie, Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas remains a stoned celebration of indifference. For a while, that was cool. Now it's bor-

GODZILLA (PG-13) There are some clever and exciting sequences, but this \$120 million epic of reconstituted Atomic Age trash lumbers more than it thrills. The film leaves us wanting both less and more-less of the dull, sketchbook characters, like Matthew Broderick's blandly boyish nuclear scientist, and more of Godzilla rocking and rolling the Big Apple. The filmmakers finally stage a terrific climax with Godzilla chasing a taxi full of our heroes, then entwining himself in the Brooklyn Bridge. The episode has n madeap audacity and visual verve—exactly what should have been there throughout the movie. **C+** (#434, May 29)

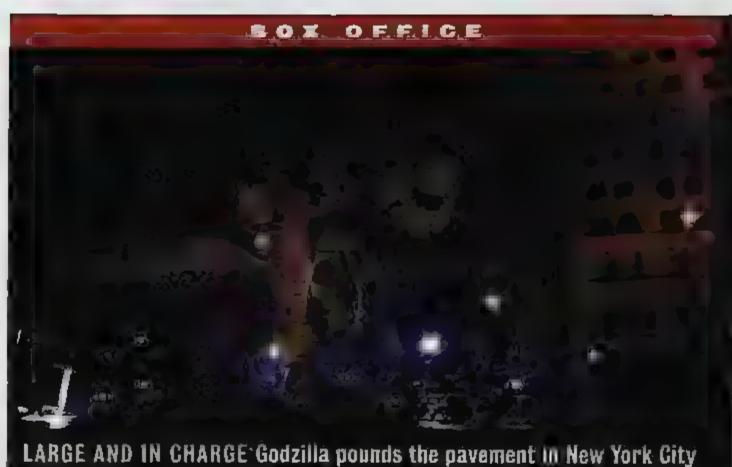
HOPE FLOATS (PG-13) Birdee Pruitt (Sandra Bullock), former Texas high school beauty queen, learns

on national TV that her husband and her best friend are having an affair. What a promising setup! The film sinks deeper than Speed 2, though, the minute the wronged woman packs up her daughter (Mae Whitman) and returns home to her own quirky mother (Gena Rowlands) and the hometown boy (Harry Connick Jr.) she spurned in her youth. The pond is so shallow in this wan romance that there's no room for anything to float, **C-** (#434, May 29) —LS

THE HORSE WHISPERER (PG-13) Robert Redford's sensual, slo-mo adaptation of the Nicholas Evans best-seller is about a wounded 14year-old girl (Scarlett Johansson), a driven mom (Kristin Scott Thomas), a traumatized horse, and the Marlboro Man (Redford) who therapeutically tames them all. The nuggets of spoken wisdom rattle around with a tad too much space. Still, the film does drive its point home: Every creature needs healing to get on with the business of living, **B** (#433, May 22)

**SLIDING DOORS** (R) One asparagus spear of a girl (Gwyneth Paltrow), two different fates in Peter Howitt's pleasant London-based fantasy, which demonstrates a lovely feeling for the power of chance in romance, **B** (#429, May 1) —LS

>> More reviews in EW Special Edition at www.ew.com < <



### THE LIZARD OF BLAHS

FING OF THE MONSTERS? We're not so sure. Yes, Godziila's tall is as long as four New York City subway cars, but he looked like a 98-pound weakling next to last Memorial Day's The Lost World: Jurassic Park. The atomic lizard pulled in \$55.7 million over the holiday weekend (\$74.3 million in its first six days)-a disappointment compared with The Lost World's record \$90.2 million haul. Deep impact, on the other claw, is becoming The Little Event Movie That Could as it closes in on the \$100 million mark. Size also didn't matter for Warren Beatty's Bulworth: The political satire that many thought would get stomped by Godzilia took in \$10.5 million in its first weekend of wide release. Unfortunately, fire-breathing monsters and rapping senators didn't leave much room for the week's other big newcomer, Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas: The Johnny Depp road trip detoured with \$4.3 million.

T O	P 20	enora. Accicad	NO. OF SETER	PERLAP PERLAPE APERLAP	SECENSE SECENSE	98882 Y6 9475
1	000ZILLA TriStar	\$55.7	3,310	\$16,836	1	\$74.3
2	Paramount/Dreum Works	\$19.4	3,250	\$5,964	3	\$98.9
3	THE HORSE WHISPERER Truchstone	\$14.5	2,049	\$7,084	2	\$33.1
4	BULWORTH 20th Century Fine	\$10.5	2,047	\$5,137	2	\$10.7
8	QUEST FOR CAMELOT Warner Bros	\$6.3	3,107	\$2,031	2	\$13.8
6	FEAR AND LOATHING IN LAS VEGAS Universal	\$4.3	1,126	\$3,850	1	\$4 3
7	TITANIC Paramount	\$3.7	2,00B	\$1,829	23	\$577.1
	CITY OF ANGELS Warner Brun.	\$3.2	1,967	\$1,650	7	\$70.5
9	HE GOT GAME Truchstone	\$1.8	1,244	\$1,421	4	\$19.1
10 🖔	PAULIE DreamWorks	\$1.4	1,502	\$947	6	\$22.2
11	SUDING DOORS Miramax/Paramount	\$1.3	522	\$2,510	5	\$8.0
12	WOO New Line	\$1.2	604	\$2,007	3	\$6.4
13	EVEREST IMAX	\$1.2	48	\$26,100	12	\$14.9
14	THE SPANISH PRISONER Sony Protures Classics	\$0.9	306	\$2,853	8	\$5.9
15	THE WEDDING SINGER Note Law	\$0.8	653	\$1,245	15	\$76,9
15	LES MISERABLES Columbia	\$0.7	555	\$1141	4	\$12.8
17	BLACK DOG ('tenvered	\$0.7	850	\$810	4	\$11.2
18	THE OBJECT OF MY AFFECTION 20th Century For	\$0.6	604	\$1,035	6	\$27.7
19	THE BIG HIT TriStor	\$0.5	525	\$994	15	\$26.3
20	AS GOOD AS IT GETS ThiStar	\$0.5	485	\$959	22	\$146.7

SOURCE EXHIBITION NELATIONS OF THE INC. INTELECTED OF MAY 21-MAY 21 MEETEND GROSS AND SHOULD THAT FIDERIES ini nglikonn 1 unglikors nome multigigreen impaters and prints großelt ha well als digrychlike gedieling.

### **ANCHORS AWAY**

WHO'S THAT GUY?

Harry Shearer WHAT'S HE UP TOP Playing the (slimy news anchor in Godzilla and the talking head who introduces highlights in The Truman Show

WHERE HAVE YOU SEEN (OR HEARD) HIM BEFORE? The for mer Saturday Night Live regu-

(lar, who cowrote and costarred) in This is Spinal Tap, hosts Le Show, a weekly program on NPR, and provides voices for The Simpsons Including his favorite, Mr. Burns. "Since the contract negotiations, I think

I'm giving him a little more of an edge. WHATES NEXT? He'll play surprise at alk-show host in Ron Howard's ED TV and then Watergate figure & Gordon Liddy in the comedy Dick. I've aiready done 25 years of nesearch, he jokes. Then there are the book projects. can trail about these yet because don't have what they call in the book business, um an idea. Jessica Shaw

54 JUNE 5, 1998





Was Louis Armstrong one of the most influential people of the century? On June 4 at 10:00 p.m. on CBS, we'll continue announcing the TIME 100. "Artists and Entertainers" is the second in a special six-part series airing over the next two years. Don't miss this unique look at the people who've shaped our past and continue to shape the future.  $\overline{NEWS}$ 

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# Slicker 'Gity

SHOWIJME

More Tales

of the City

With More Tales of the City, Showtime picks up where a timid PBS left off, revisiting Armistead Maupin's '70s San Francisco. by Ken Tucker

ARMISTEAD MAUPIN'S Tales of the City began literary life as serialized stories in a newspaper, the San Francisco Chronicle.

These short, wry, regular installments of gay and straight life in '70s San Francisco were addictively popular, and their episodic narrative made them ideal for long-form television. Sort of. When PBS presented its version of Tales

in January 1994, there was a big political foofaraw over presenting scenes of homosexual affection and dope smoking; though the

miniseries garnered strong ratings, plans for filming Maupin's follow-up collection, More Tales of the City, were scrapped—the stories were seen as a hot potato not worth handling by nervous Nellie public-broadcast execs.

Now Showtime-not dependent on government grants and eager to challenge HBO in attention-grabbing original programmingbrings forth six hours of Armistead Maupin's More Tales of the City, with much of the original cast, most of the same melancholy romance, more sex, and an utterly different TV-culture context. Yep, I mean post-Ellen.

Once again, we are plunged

TWICE-TOLD TALES Hopkins and Campbell (top); Burroughs, Siemaszko, and Dukakis (below, l. to r.)

into the pre-AIDS, disco-driven '70s, as the tenants of the rooming house at 28 Barbary Lane-overseen by the floridly maternal Mrs. Madrigal (Olympia Dukakis)—are caught up in their various pursuits of happiness. Mary Ann (Laura Linney), now a more sophisticated version of the honest Cleveland hick who was our frisky Frisco tour guide in the first Tales, is determined to find her Mr. Right. So is Mouse (Paul Hopkins), her pal and confidant; together, they take a cruise to Mexico, jokingly masquerading as husband and wife, but actually trolling for a cute guy for each of them.

Meanwhile, Mouse's roommate Mona (Chloe Webb in the PBS series, Nina Siemaszko here) quits her job and, on a lark, takes a bus trip to Reno. At the station, she meets an engaging old crone, Mother Mucca (Jackie Burroughs), who runs a house of prostitution. In one of those perfect coincidences that characterize Maupin's farcical work, Mucea also holds knowledge of Mona's true parentage that will turn the young woman's life upside down.

The other primary subplot involves Mary Ann's former boss, Beauchamp Day (Dharma & Greg's Thomas Gibson), whose wife, DeDe (Barbara Garrick), is pregnant with twins whose father isn't Beauchamp, Displaying a marvelously mean, slimy side that he keeps hidden on Dharma, Gibson hires a thug to scare DeDe into miscarrying, but the plan explodes in his face-and I mean that cliché literally.

I don't want to give much



more away; like any good soap opera, each of the six episodes of More Tales of the City depends upon serial revelations and mini-cliff-hangers. There's a fine cameo by Parker Posey as a cheerful Scientologist and a party scene in which The Larry Sanders Show's Scott Thomp-

son, Frasier's Dan Butler, and



Eating Raoul's Paul Bartel exchange wickedly catty banter. Director Pierre Gang and screenwriter Nicholas Wright are perhaps too faithful to Maupin's gay-soufflé prose, which can regularly turn out too soft and collapse with sentimentality. If you're tuning in for the naughty bits, I direct your attention to the series'

fourth segment, which features a dreamy make-out scene between Mouse and his former lover, Jon (Bill Campbell)—precisely the kind of thing that moved the Georgia legislature to formally con-

demn the '94 Tales. That original production was at once daring and a little boring in its lackadaisical pace. So is this one. But after all the hubbub over Ellen DeGeneres' quest to portray gay lifestyles in an entertaining way that was n tad less encoded than it is on, say, Xena: Warrior Princess, More Tales looks positively quaint. And this production is dragged down by a subplot about Mary Ann's new boyfriend, Burke (a perenni-

ally poker-faced Colin Ferguson), having amnesia.

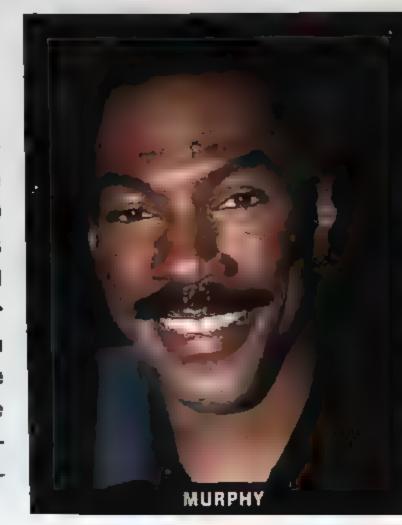
The rest of the performances hold this sprawling piece together, though. Like Gibson, Linney displays greater range here-more than she's been allowed in feature films like Congo; Hopkins' Mouse is sweet without being cloying, and Dukakis, handed the most difficult transition midway through the story, pulls it off with appropriately tart humor. In fact, that's Maupin all over: heartiness with tartiness. I wouldn't want to live in his city all the time, but these rambling six hours capture maudlin romanticism with surprising charm and, occasionally, an uplifting urgency. B-

# CONTRIBER OF The latest news from the TV beat by Joe Flint

■ STATS ALL, FOLKS! The 1997-98 television season brought more bad viewership news for the big-four networks, which hit historic lows by averaging a meager 59 percent of the primetime audience.

But like all good statisticians, the nets know how to put a positive spin on even the most dismal numbers. CBS, for example, boasts of being the only network to see a hike in total viewers (its average prime-time audience was up 2 percent—

courtesy of the Winter
Olympics—to 14.1 milion). NBC can claim another first-place win in
overall viewers (averaging 14.9 million) and the
all-important 18-to-49
demos, while Fox crows
about finishing second
for the first time ever
among that age group. In
the battle between the
would-be networks, The
WB can celebrate overtaking UPN in total view-



ers for the first time. And as for faltering ABC, well, you can only massage the numbers just so much.

■ BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD Although Fox just got done unveiling its lineup for next fail, people are mostly buzzing about two of its animated mid-season replacements: *The PJs* and *Family Guy*.

The PJs—done in "Foamation" by the Will Vinton Studios, which produced the California Raisins ad campaign—features Eddie Murphy as the voice of Thurgood Stubbs, the superintendent of a housing project. From the pilot's opening line of "Where's my whore?" to Stubbs pleading with his gun-toting neighbors to keep the noise down by using silencers, the shockfilled comedy could raise a South Park-style ruckus.

Equally outrageous is the cartoon Family Guy, about a

Simpsons-esque dysfunctional family featuring Baby Stewie, an evil 2-1/2-year-old who's hell-bent on killing his mother.

Hoping to use its upcoming NFL playoffs and Super Bowl coverage as a promotional platform, Fox plans to launch The PJs and Family Guy in late January.

■ AND SO ON This fall, fans of Michael Madsen, the star of ABC's new action drama (currently titled *Mr. Chapel*), may stare into his deep blue eyes and

think they're just too good to be true. Guess what? They'd be right. ABC, which is hoping Madsen will become the net's biggest sex symbol since the Fonz, wanted to make his greenish blue eyes bluer and is getting producers at Warner Bros. TV to do touch-up work via computer.

MADSEN





'X-FILES' BURNING QUESTIONS

### Filling Fox Holes

AHHHHHH, SUMMER: A TIME to stroll aimlessly along the beach, to savor the hickory smells of barbecue. A time to...pound your head into the wall trying to figure out what the hell is happening on 'The X-Files'?!?!?! Not that there aren't always scorching head scratchers punctuating each season, but the show dropped a couple of particularly provocative clues recently:

1. In "Travelers" (March 29), Agent Fox Mulder is sporting a wedding band in a circa-1990 flashback. Are we to assume he was once married-and could the someone be the suspicious Mimi Rogers character (Diana Fowley) introduced in the season finale? Answer: "What did your fourth-grade teacher tell you when you assumed something?" asks an X-Files source. "It makes an ass out of who?" Any chance this will be resolved in the movie? Nope.

**2.** In the same episode's flashback, Mulder is smoking a cigarette. Was this some heavyhanded clue to Cigarette Smoking Man (CSM) being Fox's real father, as well as | ask why? —Dan Snierson

Agent Spender's (and duh to that, since the same actor-Chris Owens-who plays Spender played the young CSM in 1996)? Answer: "Mulder and Spender aren't twins," teases our source. "Eventually, it will all become clear." Not, however, in the movie.

3. This season found partners Mulder and Dana Scully frequently apart—a frustrating development for those who find their tantalizingly repressed chemistry to be the heart of the show. Will this trend continue? Answer: No. The separation, according to coexec producer Frank Spotnitz, was necessary because either David Duchovny (Mulder) or Gillian Anderson (Scully) was needed on the L.A. movie set for reshoots. And fear not, the film will find the duo not only together, but trying a little tenderness.

4. If CSM smokes so much, how come Mulder didn't even try to chase him in the parking lot during the season finale? How fast can a fivepack-a-day guy run, anyway? Answer: It's The X-Files, Why OF WHINE AND ROSES

### URKEL'S LAST BOW

H, HOW we'll miss The Voice. Who will ever forget that screechy, glassshattering whine? Or his inimitable style: those rainbow suspenders, the gargantuan glasses, the way he wore his pants (skintight and holsted to the nipples). Urkei, pally, you did it your way. You got under our skin.

Yes, hard as it is to lose the legendary Frank Sinatra, now we must also bid adleu to the Chairman of the Nerds. After nine years (eight on ABC, the last on CBS) and countless "Did I do that?"s, Urkel's sitcom, Family Matters, has been canceled for lackluster ratings. The final episode which will find Urkei (played by 21-year-old Jaleel White) taking a trip on the space shuttle—airs in July.

No matter that Urkel became a late-night punchline and snagged nary an Emmy: He won our hearts! With his latex face and anything-

for-a-laugh shtick, this man-child was an underappreciated comic genius. His weekly high jinks were a high-water mark for trousers and TV alike.

But as sad as CBS' Urkel-

cide is, we should thank Nielsen we got to keep him this long. Originally, Urkel was slated for a onetime cameo-the dorky 12-yearold prom date for Laura Winslow. But the audience went wild, and so Urkel stuck around, allowing us to watch him shoot up from shrimp to beanstalk and marvel at White's astounding range: alter egos included the debonair Stefan Urquelle, cousin Myrtle, and cousin Original Gangsta Dawg (Frank wasn't the only one with links to gangsters!).

Oh, Urkel, we got a kick out of you. Say it with me now: Urkel. Urkel. Urkel. Urkel. Urkei. If you're not smiling, your heart is made of stone. -A.J. Jacobs





### REMOTEPATROL

Keeping a watch on TV by Bruce Fretts

The networks' new fall schedules offer a whole lot of been there, done that

HAVE SEEN THE FUTURE of television, and it is bland. The networks have announced their fall lineups, and judging from the clips of new series shown to advertisers and critics, there's little to get excited about. As niche cable outlets nibble away at their viewers, the broadcast nets are aiming squarely at the mainstream with run-of-the-mill fare.

Not surprisingly, NBC seems to be playing it safest-as the No. 1 network, it has the most to lose. So the Peacock is offering more of the same: single-guys-andgals-in-the-city sitcoms like Conrad Bloom (Mondays, 8:30-9 p.m.), with Fired Up's Mark Feuerstein as a New York City ad exec; and Will & Grace (Mondays, 9:30-10 p.m.), about mismatched Manhattan roommates (he's gay, she's straight!). Nathan Lane's Encore! (Tuesdays, 8:30-9 p.m.) may owe  $\mid 9-10 \text{ p.m.}$ ), a showcase

too large a debt to Frasier. It's from the same creators and has a familiar premise: A snobby opera singer returns home to live with his wacky family. At least All My Life (Thursdays, 8:30-9 p.m.) has a surprisingly appealing star in Married...With Children's

Christina Applegate and an offbeat locale (Buffalo).

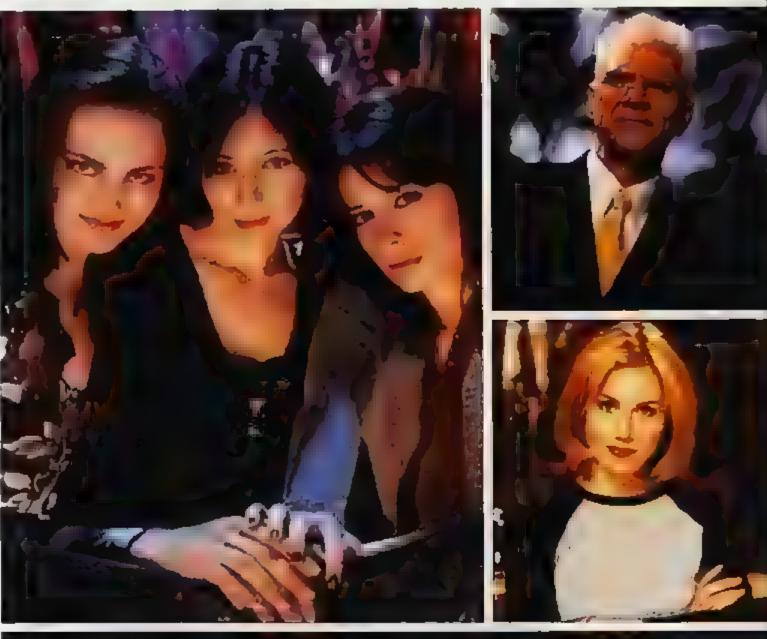
Pumped by the reacquisition of pro football, second-place CBS hopes to tackle young urban males with The King of Queens (Mondays, 8:30-9 p.m.), a promising sitcom featuring Everybody Loves Raymond's Kevin James and Seinfeld's Jerry Stiller; L.A. Docs (Mondays, 10-11 p.m.), with Ken Olin and Twin Peaks stiff Sheryl Lee as, well, L.A. docs; and Martiai Law (Saturdays,

for rotund Chinese action star Sammo Hung, who'll no doubt have a high-kicking November-sweeps crossover with Walker, Texas Ranger's Chuck Norris-if Law lasts that long.

Longing for the glory days of Coach, ABC aims to get back into the ratings game with such athletics-themed sitcoms as Sports Night (Tuesdays, 9:30-10 p.m.), a parody of ESPN's SportsCenter; The Secret Lives of Mon (Wednesdays, 9:30-10 p.m.), following three divorced guys' weekly golf game; and Brother's Keeper (Fridays, 9:30-10

p.m.), about an NFL star who moves in with his professor sibling. But the Alphabet could satisfy romance-starved viewers on Saturday nights with a stylish-looking remake of Fantasy Island (9-10 p.m.), offering Malcolm McDowell (!) as Mr. Roarke, and Cupid (10-11 p.m.), with Ellen's Jeremy Piven as a psychiatric patient who claims to be the Roman god of love.

Fox shamelessly tries to clone The X-Files' supernatural success with Brimstone (Tuesdays, 9-10 p.m.), starring thirtysomething ghost Peter Horton as an undead



FALL GUISE Charmed's Doherty (left, center); Island's McDowell; Life's Applegate



cop tracking down refugees from hell; and Hollyweird (Thursdays, 9-10 p.m.), a bizarro private-eye show from cocreators Wes Craven and Shaun Cassidy. Among Fox's new comedies, only the '70sset adolescent opus Feelin' All Right (Sundays, 830-9 p.m.) seems to be generating any good buzz.

The WB plans to capitalize on its young sensations Buffy the Vampire Slayer and Daivson's Creek by pairing them with Felicity (Tuesdays, 9-10 p.m.), a justifiably hyped new drama starring Keri Russell as a college freshman in New York City; and Charmed (Wednesdays, 9-10 p.m.), which offers Shannen Doherty as a witch-unfortunately, it's not played for laughs.

Finally, UPN wins the award for the strangest new show: The Secret Diary of Desmond Pfeiffer (Mondays, 9-9:30 p.m.), a madcap farce about...Abraham Lincoln's butler. Who says there are no fresh ideas in Hollywood?

> > Talk about your favorite TV shows at www.ew.com < <

### SOUND BITES

Dennis Rodman." RUPERT EVERENT explaining who would play the Bond girl in his proposed gay James Bond movie on Sarbara Walters Presente a to Water

LEL INC take this opportunity to not care. THE EXTRAH MICHEULE GEULAR) After Vemple Splke (James Marstere) acked her help in getting becknie girlfstand om kully the Vampire Slayer

GBS canceled 12 shows. This network has tested more bombs than India: "DAVID PETTERMAN on late Show

Kmart and war-mark are naving a low-price war over the impotency drug Viagra, in fact, some people are so excited about the low prices they no longer need the drug CONAN O BRIEN ON Lite NIERE

GOOZIII OPENEO on a record 1 363 screens. And trust me, it's going to suck on every one of them. LEWIS I LACKYON To Dally Show



### Cher

The '70s superstar did manage to turn back time with CBS' Sonny & Me: Cher Remembers, which won its time slot, drawing 13.6 million viewers.

LOSER OF THE WEEK

### NBC

The net's effort to increase its already huge May sweeps victory with an encore airing of the Seinfeld finale backfired the repeat finished fourth in its time slot, beaten handily by Cher's special;

THE RATINGS

### 'SPRINGER' FEVER

N THE ROUGH-ANDtumble world of syndicated TV, Jerry Springer (3rd) continues to kick talkshow tall, KO'ing such tamer fare as Oprah Winfrey (5th), Montel Williams (14th), and Rosie O'Donnell (16th). Gameshow titan Wheel of Fortune (1st) again bested the Alex Trebek brainteaser Jeopar-



IN THE SWING Jerry's fisticulfladen show packs a big punch

dy! (2nd) by more than 1 million viewers, while celeb newsmagazine Entertainment Tonight (8th) enjoyed a comfortable lead over nearest competitor Extra (18th). On the sitcom front, Home Improvement (6th) came within striking distance of Seinfeld (4th), while Xena: Warrior Princess (13th) battled her way to the top of the action heap. The X-Files (7th) remained tops with sci-fi fans, while Judge Judy (12th) ruled as the only court show in the top 30.

#### TOP 30 SYNDICATED SHOWS

		TIEMER
1	WHEEL OF FORTUNE King World	10.
#	JEOPARDYI King World	8.
8	THE JERRY SPRINGER SHOW Universal	7.
4	SEINFELD Columbia TriStar	6.
- 5	THE OPRAH WINFREY SHOW King World	6.
6	HOME IMPROVEMENT Buena Vista	6.
7	THE X-FILES Twentieth Century Fox	6
8	ENTERTAINMENT TONIGHT Paraunount	5.4
- 10	THE SIMPSONS Twentieth Century Fox	5.1
10	WHEEL OF FORTUNE (WEEKEND) King World	. 5.6
11	FRASIER Paramount	.4.9
12	JUDGE JUDY Worldvision	4.7
13	XENA: WARRIOR PRINCESS Universal	4.4
14	THE MONTEL WILLIAMS SHOW Paramount	4,3
	CENTURY 16 Twentieth Century Fox	4.5
16	THE ROSJE O'DONNELL SHOW Warner Bros	.4.2
17	STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE Paramount	4.1
18	INSIDE EDITION King World	3.9
	WALKER, TEXAS RANGER Columbia TriStar	3.9
	SALLY JESSY RAPHAEL Universal	. 3,9
	EXTRA Warner Bros	3.9
	NYPD BLUE Twentieth Century Fox	
23	HERCULES: THE LEGENDARY JOURNEYS [Indiversit] .	.3.8
24	THE JENNY JONES SHOW Warner Bros.	.3.7
	LIVE WITH REGIS & KATHIE LEE Buenn Vista	.3.7
26	RICKI LAKE Columbia TriStor	. 33
27	BAYWATCH All American	
	EARTH: FINAL CONFLICT Tribute	.3.2
29	REAL TV Paramount	
30	HARD COPY Paramount	3.0
property.		-

THE MULLIONS WEEK DT MAY 4-10, 1990 MURCE, NIELSEN MEDIA REBEAUCH

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### WHATOWATCH

A day-to-day guide to notable programs. Times are Eastern daylight and are subject to change, by Mike Flaherty

#### MONDAY

4-4:30PM SAILOR MOON (Cartoon Network, TV-Y7~ FV) The latest Japanese Import to the net's cartoon hour is the



JAMES CAGNEY WEEK (Turner Classic Movies) A 44-film tribute including "You dirty rat!" classics The Public Enemy and White Heat, plus hoof-happy romps like Yankee Doodle Dandy. (Airs through June 7.)

saga of a 14-year-old

girl determined to save

the world from an evil

queen and an entity

called the Negaverse.

9-11PM ED SULLIVAN: THE ROCK 'N' ROLL YEARS (VH1) How sad that in its packaging of sterling Sullivan clips (à la tonight's "Smash Hits of the Sixties"), VH1 nearly spoils the fun. Its lame, pseudo-retrographics and theme music are bad enough. But those pedantic voice-overs are downright insulting. Hello, you're a music channel! No need to set up a Stones or Beatles clip by explaining what the British Invasion was. A little more canniness and a little less condescension would go a long way. B-

8:30PM-12:30AM **BRADY BUNCH MARA-**THON (Nick at Nite, TV-G) Adding the so-badit's-good '70s sitcom to its sked, Nick airs eight episodes per night through Friday.

9-9:30pm **MYSTERIES & SCAN-DALS: BELA LUGOSI** (E!, TV-PG) No stranger to bearing teeth himself, former gossip columnist A.J. Benza picks over the destitute, drugriddled carcass of the Dracula star.

10-11PM THE PRACTICE (ABC. TV-14-SV) We'll eat our collective hat if guest star John Larroquette doesn't get an Emmy nod for his turn as unctuous, ingenious murderer Joey Heric. (R)

# Guest

Look Who's On The Couch This Week

**NORM MACDONALD** 

JAY LENO Monday Maria Pitillo (Godzilla) Tuesday Ed Harris, Jennifer Love Hewitt, musical guests Brooks & Dunn and Reba Wednesday Magic Johnson Thursday Jessica Lange, musical guest Rod Stewart Friday Jonathan Winters, musical guest Natalie Imbruglia

POLITICALLY INCORRECT Monday Maria Conchita Alonso, Doug Savant Tuesday Swoosie Kurtz, Andrea Thompson (NYPD Blue), Arsenio Hall Wednesday Rob Estes, Julia Sweeney Thursday David Brenner Friday George Hamilton, John Fugelsang (America's Funmest Home Videos)

DAVID LETTERMAN Monday John Goodman, model Esther Cañadas, musical guest Sarah McLachlan Tuesday Norm Macdonald, musical guest Randy Travis Wednesday Sarah Jessica Parker, Bill Bradley Thursday Bob Saget, Laura Linney (The Truman Show) Friday George Carlin, Evander Holyfield

REGIS & KATHIE LEE Monday Hank Azaria Tuesday A performance from Broadway's Ragtime Wednesday Harrison Ford, musical guest Gloria Estefan Thursday Michael Douglas, Norm Macdonald, musical guest Michael Crawford Friday David Schwimmer, Martin Short, musical guest Usher

CONAN O'BRIEN Monday Billy Crystal, Wolfgang Puck (R) Tuesday Mike Myers (R)

### TUESDAY

8-10PM **BUFFY THE VAMPIRE** SLAYER (WB, TV-PG-V) Bone up on Sunnydale lore with a replay of Buffy's very first episodes, "Welcome to Hellmouth" and "Harvest." (R)

9:30-10PM JUST SHOOT ME (NBC, TV-PG) Maya and Dennis steal Nina's famed bikini from the Model Cafe after it's given decidedly non-star treatment. (R)

10-11PM TNN LIVE (TNN, TV-G) Willie Nelson takes your phone and Internet requests from the stage in Austin, Tex.

10-11PM NYPD BLUE (ABC, TV-14-L) "Lost Israel," in which Simone, Sipowicz. and Russell play cat and mouse with a murdered boy's creepy dad (guest star Brian Markinson) gets another go-round. (R; part 1 of 2.)

10-11pm<sup>#</sup>

June 2

P.O.V. (PBS) The nonfiction-film showcase kicks off its season with Baby, It's You, filmmaker Anne Makepeace's fearlessly intimate account of the year she and her husband, Peter Behrens (above); spent trying to conceive a child via modern fertillty methods. What sets it apart is not only the unlimited access (we see tensions escalate between the couple, and Makepeace undergoes surgery) but the quiet exploration of the definition of family in the oh-so-alternative '90s, A- Shawna Malcom CHECK LOCAL LISTINGS.

### MHOTTOWATCH

#### WEDNESDAY

8-8:30PM THE NANNY (CBS, TV-PG) Brian Setzer, Lisa Loeb, and Fran Drescher's This is Spinal Tap alter ego, Bobbie Flekman, show up at the Shefflelds' to film a music video. (R)

8-10pm THE NET (Fox, TV-PG-LV) AOL was never like this...at least not yet. Sandra Bullock is invested with a new identity by a computer network and cyberstalked in the 1995 feature film.

8:30-9pm WORKING (NBC, TV-PG) Last season's stuntcasting highlight reunites Fred Savage with his Wonder Years squeeze, Danica

McKellar. She stars as the femme fatale a suddenly hip Matt picks up in a bar. (R)

9-11PM **METEORITES!** (USA Network, TV-PG) Looks like Gargantua all over again, as USA hitches a ride on the cataclysmic coattails of Deep impact and the upcoming Armageddon with a flick about an Arizona town's bombardment by the heavenly bodies. Tom Wopat and Roxanne Hart star.

9-10PM PUBLIC EYE (CBS, TV-PG) The newsmagazine reports on a lawsuit plaintiff who claims she lost her job because she had breast cancer.

NBA FINALS, GAME 1 OR 2 (NBC) Bob Costas, Doug Collins, and Isalah Thomas are in the booth for roundball's championship showdown. (Live)

10-10:30PM SOUTH PARK (Comedy Central, TV-MA) The boys play dodgeball this week, but we're betting the titular subplot of "Conjoined Fetus Lady" is the real, um, treat.

10-11PM CHICAGO HOPE (CBS. TV-PG) in "The incredible Adventures of Baron von Munchausen...By Proxy," Kronk goes up against a woman who appears to be willfully making her own child ill, (R)



8:30-9PM THE SIMPLE LIFE (CBS, TV-PG) "This show comes from my desire to be a domestic goddess," says Who's the Boss? vet Judith Light (above) of her summer-replacement vehicle. "I am truly a Martha Stewart wannabe." Light stars as the perfectionist host of a home-decorating show who trades in her city existence for some good ol' country livin'. As the second CBS sitcom this year to explore the neuroses of a lifestyle guru (Style & Substance was the first), what sets this one apart? Says Light, "We've got tons of farm animals." That, we assume, is a good thing. — SM

FRIDAY

9-10:30PM\* ENDING WELFARE AS WE KNOW IT (PBS) The docu-

WAY OVER THERE

da like D.W. Griffith's Hearts of the World (1918) to WWII

"preparedness pics" to the Ironic disillusionment of Apoc-

alypse Now (starring narrator Martin Sheen, above). B+

7:30-9:30PM

mentary checks up on six families in the aftermath of 1996's workfare legislation. \*CHECK LOCAL LISTINGS

June 5

1-2AM FIRST FRIDAY: EXTREME SHOPPING (QVC) Dick Latvala and ex-Grateful Dead roadle Steve Parish peddle live tapes from the band's archives as Jerry Garcia spins in his grave.

CINEMA COMBAT: HOLLYWOOD GOES TO WAR (American) Movie Classics) In addition to making America the home of the brave and the policeman of the world, its nearly inces-'sant history of armed conflict sure has produced some good movies. To wit, the survey (a complement to AMC's war-themed Film Preservation Festival) documents Tinseltown's ideological march to freedom, from WWI propagan-

> AMERICA UNDERCOVER (HBO, TV-MA) From the folks

SATURDAY

Juna 6

9-10<sub>PM</sub> EARLY EDITION (CBS, TV-PG-L) Gary warns an excolleague about the disas-

trous results of his upcoming plastic surgery. (Where was this guy when Cher needed him?) (R)

9-11PM

HOUSE OF GAMES (Bravo, R) Spanish Prisoner fans will appreciate David Mamet's directorial debut (1987), featuring Joe Mantegna as a charismatic con man and Lindsay Crouse as his unsuspecting target.

10-11PM PROFILER (NBC, TV-PG) Sam finds Jack slipperler than ever, unaware of his changes of MO and his vicious new protégé (Traci Lords). (R)

11-MIDNIGHT

who brought you "Hookers at the Point" now comes "Pimps Up, Ho's Down," a documentary look at the world's oldest profession, which proves that behind every successful working girl is an even more successful, exploitative mack daddy.



CABLE PREMIERE

8-9:45PM MEN IN BLACK (HBO, PG-13) Their suits and shades still look cool. Let's see how well the F/X-laden exploits. of Tommy Lee Jones and Will Smith (above) hold upon the small screen...

### THURSDAY

9-11PM 8-8:30PM 1998 MTV MOVIE AWARDS (MTV, TV-14) Matthew Perry has a "There's always the hope that because they asked me to host: ing up to it. (R) SEASON PREMIERE 9-10PM\* MYSTERY! (PBS) P.D. James' Commander

the show, they'll choose to give it to me," muses Samuel L. Jackson about his chances of snagging a Best Actor statuette in this, the year of Di-Caprio. The Jackie Brown costar had the bad luck to be nominated for the top honor instead of the much more appropriate and winnable—Best Villain award, Accepting Leo's triumph as a foregone conclusion. and unable to resist a gibe at the network's pretensions to Price Waterhouse-esque credibility, Jackson

adds: "...like we believe

they actually count

the votes anyhow."

FRIENDS (NBC, TV-PG) fleld day when Chandler kisses Joey's girlfriend, then agonizes over own-

Dalgliesh returns in "Original Sin," investigating a vendetta in the publishing world. (Concludes June 18.) "CHECK LOCAL LISTINGS

9-9:30PM SEINFELD (NBC, TV-PG) George's borrowed tol-

MC SAMMY

let reading and Uncle Leo's shoplifting get the dishonorable duo in trouble with a bookstore. Kramer gets an Idea for a ricksha service from a Hong Kong travel guide. (R)

9-11PM ALMA AWARDS (ABC, TV-PG) Jimmy Smits and Dalsy Fuentes host the festivities honoring positive portrayals of Latinos in TV and the movies. (And the winner isn't...Jerry Seinfeld!)

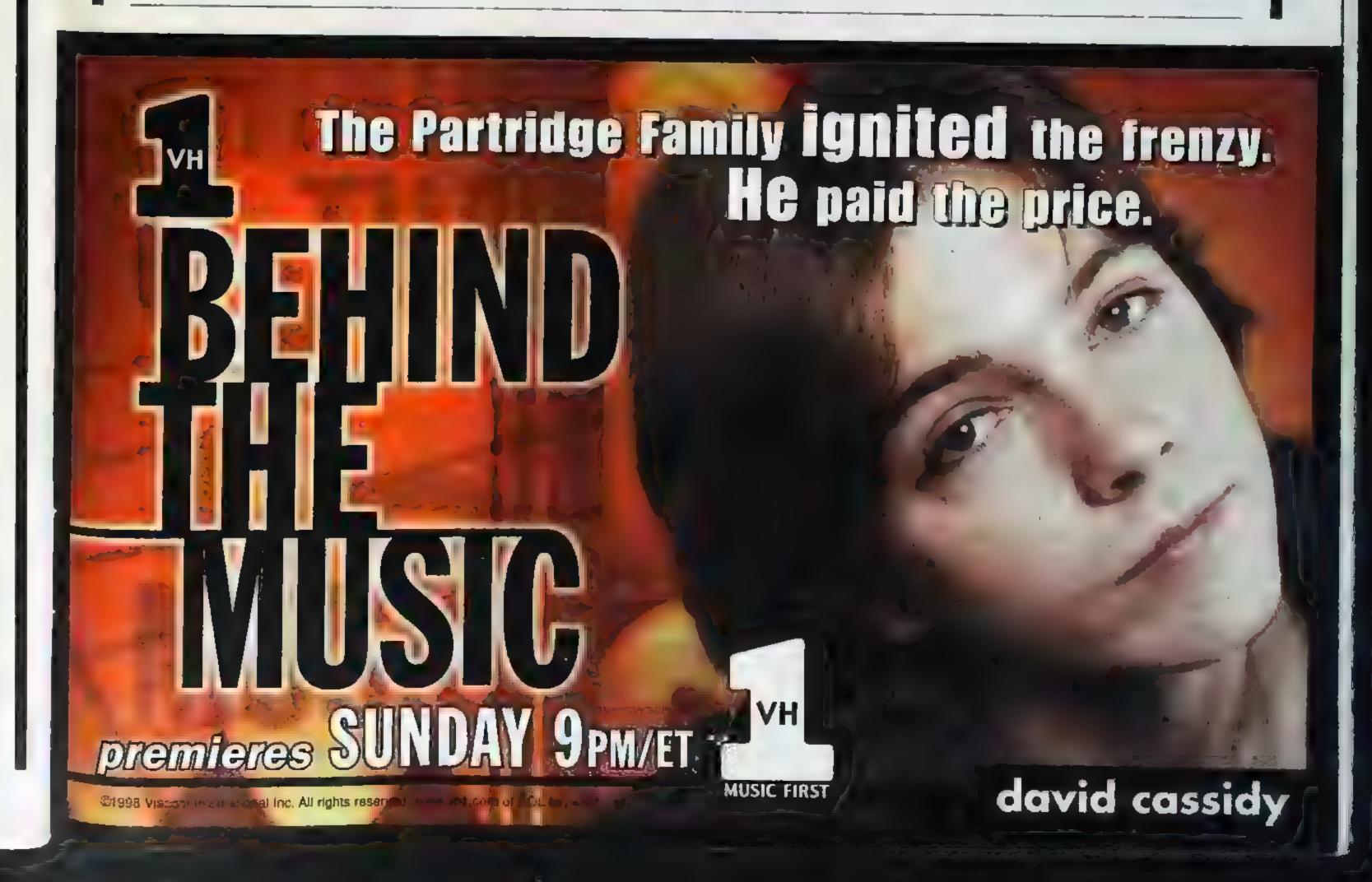
10-11PM ER (NBC, TV-PG) Remember that time the ER was packed with klds after a school-bus accident? And that crackhead accused Hathaway of hurting her crack baby? And Benton and Carter got all up in each other's face? That's this one.

### Choice Reruns

URING MAY'S PRE-FINALE SEINFELD hype, an entire generation of viewers must have wondered why in the world Jerry kept citing The Abbott and Costello Show (TV Land, weekdays, 6:30-7 p.m.) as an influence. Well, here's your chance to connect the dots. Sure, there are the facile character parallels (i.e., Elaine as an update of A&C's chick in residence, Hillary Brooke; Newman as a latter-day take on Joe Besser's Stinky). But more important, take note of the rapid-fire dialogue and editing, and the exasperatingly trying roster of recurring characters (Mr. Bacciagalupe, anyone?).

IN YOUR FACE Bud and Lou in typically docile form





### HATTOMETER

#### SUNDAY

June 7

BIG NIGHT (Sundance Channel, R) Part of Sundance's "but what I really want to do is direct" month is actorsturned-auteurs Stanley Tucci and Campbell Scott's 1996 drama about a pair of immigrant restaurateurs in New Jersey. (Also see 9 p.m.)

4-5PM
MYSTERIES OF THE BIBLE
(A&E, TV-G) "Magic and Miracles of the Old Testament"
puzzles over apparent inconsistencies and contradictions in scriptural treatment of the supernatural.

7-9pm
THE WONDERFUL WORLD
OF DISNEY (ABC, TV-G)
We're just gonna assume
Harvey Keltel was hurting for
the rent back in 1994 when he
signed on to play a Fagin-like
organ-grinder in Monkey
Trouble, a feature film about
a little girl who shelters a
simian thief trying to go
straight(!). (R)



7-9PM
THE COWBOY AND THE
MOVIE STAR (The Family
Channel, TV-PG) Maybe archetypes are the last refuge
of Hollywood scoundrels.
How else to explain Sean
Young as the Spoiled Starlet
who falls in with, then falls
for, Perry King's Strongand-Silent Type?

8-8:30pm
THE SIMPSONS (Fox, TV-PG) A memorable episode from February finds everguilible Homer dragging his brood into a Heaven's Gate-esque cuit called the Movementarians. (R)

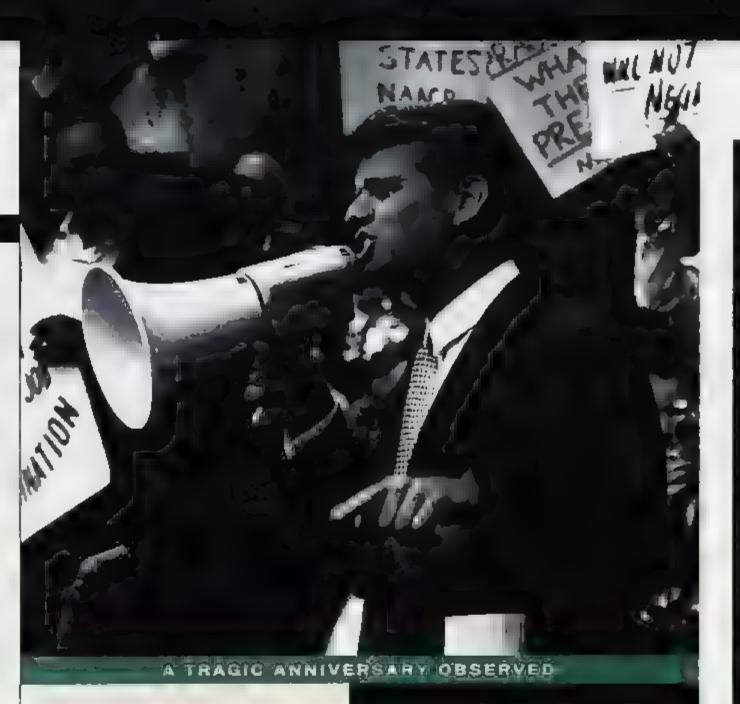
BROADWAY '98: LAUNCH-ING THE TONY AWARDS (PBS) An unusual collaboration has PBS going backstage to gauge the preshow vibe and air the first hour of the actual ceremony, after which CBS grabs the baton for the remainder of the gala.

8:30-9PM
KING OF THE HILL (Fox, TV-PG) His pain is our gain: Bobby endures yet another excrucitating rite of boyhood passage (a broken heart) when he finds himself odd man out during an adventure with Connie and Joseph. (R)

9-11PM SEX ON THE RIVIERA '98 (E!) Host Steve Kmetko works

8-9PM

BRAVO PROFILES: THE SOUL OF STAX (Bravo) With the funkified R&B of its Memphis-based house band Booker T and the MG's and frontmen like Isaac Hayes (above), Otis Redding, Rufus Thomas, and Sam and Dave, Stax Records was poised to become a signifier of cultural (read: racial) healing in the '60s. The documentary tells the story of the storefront label's meteoric ascent and its pitiful collapse, thanks to the division that followed Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination and a couple of ill-considered distribution deals with major labels. While packed with dazzling performance clips, its most poignantly resonant image may be that of Booker T. and ace guitarist Steve Cropper solemnly surveying the rubble-strewn lot that now stands in Stax's place. A



his Ken-doil charm in the voyeuristic gawk at the array of flesh merchants and floozies, hangers-on and hanger-outers, who populate the sun-drenched cinema-fest.

9-11pm
TREES LOUNGE (Sundance
Channel, R) Indie-film poster
boy Steve Buscemi appears
behind and in front of the
camera in the 1996 film about
a Long Island loser and his
skelly environs.

9-10PM
THE X-FILES (Fox, TV-PG-V)
"Redux" completes last season's November sweeps trilogy, as Cigarette Smoking
Man comes out of the shadows with an offer to save
Scully's life. (R)

9-10 PM
INTERVIEWS I'LL NEVER
FORGET (CBS Eye on People,
TV-PG) David Frost harkens
back to tête-à-têtes with
Sirs Anthony Hopkins and
John Gielgud, Henry Fonda,
James Stewart, David Niven,
and a particularly campy
Joan Crawford.

9-11PM
1998 TONY AWARDS (CBS)
Ragtime, Cabaret, and The
Lion King lead the pack of
Great White Way nominees,
while omnipresent host
Rosle O'Donnell leads the
Radio City Music Hall crowd,
live from the Big Apple.

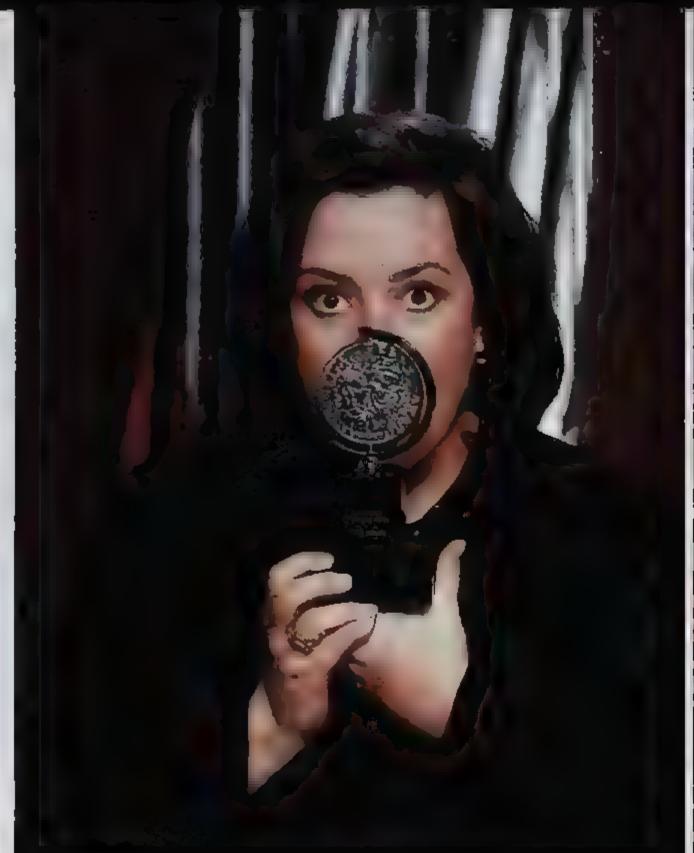
8-11PM ROBERT F. KENNEDY: A MEMOIR (Discovery) With its connotations of autobiographical recollection, memoir seems an odd tag for the densely sober documentary, given that nearly none of its exposition comes straight from its subject. Instead, narrators Glenn Close, Mario Cuomo, and Ving Rhames preside over an unabashed tribute (observing the 30th anniversary of RFK's assassination) in the form of a political history. If it's balanced, unsparing history you're looking for, you won't find it here. However, as a loving look back at a dynamic figure apparently destined to effect a sea change in American politics and policy, it's a telling, tragic eyeful. B

SEASON PREMIERE

9:30-10pm
ARLI\$\$ (HBO, TV-MA) Oscar
De La Hoya and Al Michaels
guest-star as the feckless
flack fights to get a falsely
outed quarterback hired.

THE AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE SALUTE TO ROBERT WISE (NBC, TV-G) The
visionary lensman behind
West Side Story and The
Sound of Music receives
AFI's Silver Star award.
Wise's Sound muse, Julie
Andrews, hosts.













# Our Favorite Year

As Broadway celebrates a banner season and gears up for the hightoned Tony Awards, we'd like to honor some of the theater's unsung heroes—as well as a few undone egos. by Jess Cagle

will be broadcast on June 7 (by CBS, live from Radio) City Music Hall), we're now taking bets on how many people will give thanks to di-

SINCE THE TONY AWARDS rector Julie Taymor, whose Lion King has 11 nominations. We're betting on whether the production number from the down-and-dirty revival of Cabaret will give

Ralph Reed a heart attack. And we're wagering big money on how many winners will thank their same-sex lovers on national television. (Oh, those theater people! So

liberal!) One safe bet: Broadway will give jubilant regards to Broadway, which got a nice face-lift during the 1997-98 season. Its audiences got younger, its box offices sang, and its profile was raised.

But the Tonys will tell only part of the story, since they ignore Off Broadway and the backstage dramas that make New York theater so relentlessly entertaining. So the curtain goes up on EW's awards for the stuff-both on stage and off-that made us cheer and jeer this season.

■ THE VIAGRA AWARD (for most potent boosterism): On her syndicated talk show, Tony host Rosle O'Donnell is giving Broadway its best PR since the days of Ed Sullivan. According to producers, she's also making a marked difference in ticket sales (when she spoke this season, The Lion King roared). She's Broadway's freshest, most wideeyed, and-other than The New York Times' increasingly capricious Ben Brantleymost powerful commentator.

THE BETTY CURRIE AWARD (for getting the most unwanted headline): Alec Baldwin took a stab at Shakespeare opposite Angela Bassett at the Public Theatre and caused the Daily News to holler, YO, 'MAC-BETH'! FUHGEDDABOUDIT/ BALDWIN PLAYS SCOTTY LIKE GOTTI.

THE MADONNA AWARD (for most interesting matron): It's a tie! Marin Mazzie whips up a miracle each night as Ragtime's turn-of-the-century WASP matriarch; with a clear, soaring voice and subtle performance, she gives

DAYS OF WHINE AND ROSIE (Clockwise from top left) O'Donnell, Ragtime's Mazzie, Simon, June Moon's Nauffts, Show's Skinner (L) and Ripley

the epic production a compassionate soul. And Allison Janney, the long-suffering wife of longshoreman Anthony LaPaglia in A View From the Bridge, works quiet, desperate magic.

THE BARBRA STREISAND AWARD (for getting snubbed): It's a three-way tie! Overlooking Jack Klugman and Tony Randall (in The Sunshine Boys) was downright disrespectful of Tony, and Liam Neeson (in The Judas Kiss) should not have been ignored. At least Neeson can celebrate the nomination of his wife, Cabaret's Natasha Richardson. And father of a toddler Tony Randall still has sex, apparently, so that's some consolation.

■ THE BABY JANE AWARD (for strangest sister act): Producers of Side Show—the failed musical about Siamese twins-lobbied for and got a, uh, joint Tony nomination for the show's hip-locked heroines Alice Ripley and Emily Skinner. We'll be watching the telecast to make sure that they're sitting in the same seat.

■ THE ELLEN DEGENERES AWARD (for being underappreciated): One of this season's most delicious comedies, the estimable Drama Dept.'s quick-witted staging of the 1929 Ring Lardner-George S. Kaufman play June Moon, charmed the critics but closed quietly after a short run Off Broadway. The best thing about it: Geoffrey Nauffts as the play's lovable songwriting rube. He unearthed comedy gems in the antique script,

performing a feat of artistry and archaeology.

■ THE OLD TESTAMENT AWARD (for letting there be light): Peggy Eisenhauer boasts two lighting design nominations for her shining work on Ragher brilliantly shadowy Cabaret (with Mike Baldassari). She has earned the right to wear a lampshade on Tony night.

THE LENNY AND SQUIGGY AWARD (for Broadway's most unwelcome guests): Novice Broadway composer Paul Simon said he was going to show us how to do it right. Wrong. Despite a pretty, Tony-nominated score, the \$11 million fiasco The Capeman went slip-sliding into flop history. And before the asteroid of Deep Impact or

the star of Godzilla got a chance to whack New York City, there was...Quentin Tarantino. First, he offended the critics, who savaged his Broadway debut as a bad guy in Wait Until Dark. time (with Jules Fisher) and | Then, more recently, the pugilistic director-turnedthesp got into a racially charged scuffle in a Manhattan restaurant; he's currently being sued by a woman who alleges that he slugged her. And he won't go away. Wait Until Dark is putting up an admirable fight at the box office, and Tarantino is scheduled to remain on Broadway until Aug. 30, It's been reported that he might be replaced by Seinfeld's relatively easygoing Michael Richards. That seems unlikely, but... Kramer! Save us! ■

# THE NEW DAYS OF DISCO

ALK ABOUT stayin' alive. Tony Manero came back last month, when actor Adam Garcia strutted onto a London stage and sang, "Well, you can tell by the way I use my walk, I'm a woman's man, no time to talk." That's right, kids. Saturday Night Fever, the musical, has arrived.

The stage Fever, which opened at the London Palladium on May 5, looks an awful lot like the 1977 John Badham movie that launched a million white suits and made John Travolta a movie star. Produced by Robert Stigwood (who produced the movie) along with Paul Nicholas and David lan, the stage version features disco music from the movie plus two new Bee Gees songs written for the show.

There is one major difference: While the film featured music, the stage version (directed by Arlene Phillips, book by The Scarlet Pimpernel's Nan Knighton) has Tony Manero breaking into song along with his rough-andtumble buddles, but without the Glbbs' falsettos. García sings "Stayin' Alive" with his finger in the air, croons "More Than a Woman," and belts "Tragedy" (the 1979 Bee Gees hit thrown in far good measure) during the jumpingoff-the-bridge scene.

"It's a brand new beast," says Nicholas. Still, "What you see is the film, except you get a greater dance element. [in the film] all of the dancing is in the club. We're able to introduce it at other points."

While the Australian Garcia, 24, has garnered good notices for the Herculean task of filling Travolta's shoes (he even has a British top 20 hit with "Night Fever"), the show itself has received lukewarm to bad reviews. Nevertheless, Fever is expected to eventually arrive in its native land. And could the musical version of Fever's garish sequel, Staying Alive, be next? Nicholas says rather ominously, "You never know." - Joe Neumaler



# On Broadway

#### **Tony Contenders**

ART Yasmina Reza's dazzling disquisition on art and male friendship pulled in three Tony nominations, for best new play, best director (Matthew Warchus), and best actor. With a cast of three terrific performers (Alan Alda, Victor Garber, and Alfred Molina) it's tough to honor just one of them, but from the minute Molina bursts on stage with a tour de force monologue, he's a magnetic force field of energy. (TC) A -Lisa Schwarzbaum

THE BEAUTY QUEEN OF LEENANE Martin McDonagh's hystericalthen harrowing-play about a mother and daughter living too close for comfort in rural Ireland hit the big time after a brief run Off Broadway. Currently residing at the Walter Kerr, it's neck and neck with another import, Art, for the best-play title. My bet's on Beauty, with its artful performances by the four-member (all nominated) Irish cast. (TC) A

CABARET This sexy, sleazy incarnation of the 1966 John Kander-Fred Ebb musical boasts 10 nominations and is the front-runner in the best-revival category. Other favorites are Natasha Richardson as a vulnerable Sally Bowles (just as memorable as Liza Minnelli's brasher turn) and Alan Cumming as the hipthrusting Emcee. Nominated codirectors Sam Mendes and Rob Marshall (who's also nominated for choreography) make the show at once dark and exhilarating. (TC) A -William Stevenson

THE CHAIRS Director Simon Me-Burney's funny-creepy update of Eugène Ionesco's 1952 absurdist play is surprisingly absorbing (even if you don't usually like this sort of thing), thanks largely to the performances of nominees Geraldine McEwan and Richard Briers. As the oddball, heartbreaking Old Woman and Old Man, they bicker and flirt nonsensically, filling the myriad title characters with imaginary guests, valiantly postponing —JC death. (TC) B+



you've seen Linda Lavin only in the sitcom Alice, her haunting, Tony-nominated performance as Mrs. Van Daan will come as a revelation. It's a shame that this production's original Anne, Natalie Portman (she's been replaced by All My Children's Nathalie

THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK If | Paulding), and others in the excellent cast were passed over for nominations, although this fine reworking of the 1955 drama is nominated for revival of a play. (TC) A

> FOREVER TANGO This colorful Argentinean revue received one nomination, for the choreography by the show's skillful dancers, whose flashy costumes and perfectly synchronized, lightningquick steps are captivating. Only when the orchestra performs alone does the evening begin to drag. (TM) B -WS

FREAK John Leguizamo's zippy, moving autobiographical oneman show is up for a best-newplay Tony, which is a bit goofy, since it's hard to imagine anyone but Leguizamo (also up for best actor) as its star. The play does, however, deserve to be extended-and it has been, until July 4. (TC) B+ GOLDEN CHILD From the pen of

David Henry Hwang (a 1988 Tony winner for M Butterfly) comes an engaging, deeply intelligent meditation on the rewards and bitter costs of freedom and individuality. But don't let that scare you. It's also a tantalizingly suspenseful family melodrama, set in 1918 China, where a wealthy man's three wives fight a war of wills while trying to dodge (or embrace) dawning century of progress that's about to flood their doorstep. Gorgeously staged, designed, and acted, Hwang's work richly deserves both its best-new-play nomination and a far larger audience. -Mark Harris (TC) A-

ALSO PLAYING ...

## CIRCUS OF THE TV STARS

OU CAN CATCH THEM in summer reruns, or you can see Mad About You's Helen Hunt in Lincoln Center's Twelfth Night (TC), opening July 16... Caroline in the City's Malcolm Gets in A New Brain (TC), a James Lapine-William Finn musical opening June 18...ER's Yvette Freeman as jazz great Dinah Washington in Dinah Was (TM)...Frasier's Peri Glipin, now starring in As Bees in Honey Drown (TC)...and 3rd Rock From the Sun's Kristen Johnston in The Skin of Our Teeth, opening June 28 (free tickets available at Central Park's Delacorte Theater). Meanwhile, a cast of very versatile unknowns from Cirque du Soleil perform feats of derring-do and chiropractic miracles through July 5 In Quidam (800-678-5440) .... And for information about Central Park's free SummerStage concerts (featuring Lisa Loeb and the New York City Grand Opera, among others) log on to www.summerstage.org.



How to Get TICKET

Unless otherwise noted, tickets can be ordered (with surcharges) from Tele-Charge (TC), 800-432-7250 (or 212-239-6200 in the New York area); or from Ticketmaster (TM), 800-755-4000 (or 212-307-4100).

HIGH SOCIETY At least the 1956 movie-musicalization of The Philadelphia Story had Grace Kelly; this stage version is wholly graceless. To pad out the lean Cole Porter score of the slight comedy about a spoiled heiress skittering between her cloddish fiancé and her caddish ex-husband, the producers have scotchtaped other Porter tunes into unfailingly inappropriate places, sometimes with brand-new lyrics (well, did you evah?). Performances range from valiant (notably Tony nominee John Mc-Martin's drunken Uncle Willie) to not. (TC) C

HONOUR It's a pleasure to see Jane Alexander back on stage, though this predictable, puny 80minute drama about a woman whose marriage disintegrates when her husband (Falcon Crest's Robert Foxworth) falls for an ambitious young journalist (The Truman Show's Laura Linney) feels more like a warm-up acting exercise than a play. Alexander's weary, acerbic turn and Enid Graham's portrayal of her seething daughter both won Tony nominations, but they can't compensate for an undernourished script that telegraphs every one of its non-surprises. (TC) C --MH

THE LION KING No, not even innovative director Julie Taymor can keep the first act from dragging in places. But oh, the artistry and innovation at work herethe puppetry and the visual poetry, the memorably breathtaking "Circle of Life" opening number, the great lanky giraffes, the lovely music by Elton John | best actress. (TM) B+

(among others), and the magnificent vocal stylings of featuredactress nominee Tsidii Le Loka as Rafiki, the baboon mystic. Besides its booty of Tony nods, a special award should go to Disney for making prepubescent audiences fall in love with theater. If only more of them could get tickets. (TM) A+ -JC

**RAGTIME** With 13 Tony nominations (the most of any show) and a Drama Desk award for best musical, Ragtime could very well take the same honor from the mouth of The Lion King on the big night. It's a deserving contender: Ragtime's richly talented ensemble (including nominees Marin Mazzie, Audra McDonald, Brian Stokes Mitchell, and Peter Friedman) and its beautiful score (by Stephen Flaherty and Lynn Ahrens) rest solidly on nominee Terrence McNally's fleet adaptation of the E.L. Doctorow novel-all in all m phenomenal accomplishment. (TM) A —JC

THE SCARLET PIMPERNEL There's only one reason to see this otherwise lazy new musical (and darkhorse contender); nominee Douglas Sills as the titular English aristocrat who sings mightily, prances hilariously, swaggers handsomely, and outfoxes wittily some French revolutionaries. (TM) C

1776 A long shot for best musical revival (against Cabaret), but don't count it out. Director Scott Ellis' staging of the 1969 Sherman Edwards-Peter Stone show about the signing of the Declaration of Independence is the most enjoyable history lesson ever. (TM) A -JC

THE SOUND OF MUSIC Director Susan H. Schulman's earnestly bland take on the beloved Rodgers and Hammerstein musical (a very long shot for best revival) fails to add much to the definitive 1965 film versionwith the exception of an inexplicably busy set. The familiar humworthy tunes ("Do-Re-Mi," etc.) are nicely sung by the talented Rebecca Luker, though the Von Trapp tykes are too precious by half (TC) **C-** —Kipp Cheng

A VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE Anthony LaPagha's blazing performance as Brooklyn longshoreman Eddie Carbone earned him a Tony nod for best actor, one of four given to this elegant revival of Arthur Miller's 1955 drama. The impeccable Alhson Janney, playing Eddie's Linda Lomanesque wife, is in the running for

BOX OFFICE

### DECENT EXPOSURE

E'RE last year's news," says Sam Crothers, coproducer of the 1997 musical The Life, set in the Times Square of the late '70s. "Granted, it was good news." indeed, The Life received 12 nominations last season, and while the best-newmusical prize went to Titanic, Crothers thinks "the nominations alone sure gave the show a boost." The point is, audiences were in-

trigued by the rollicking Life hookers who performed on last year's Tony telecast. Among this year's musical nominees, Ragtime and The Lion King are already at the top of the charts, but The Scarlet Pimpernel-If it Impresses TV audiences during its spot on the June ?



show—could get a much-needed boost, despite its thin chances of taking home the gold disc. When it comes to plays, however, all eyes are on the prize. Of last season's best-new-play contenders, only the winner, The Last Night of Ballyhoo, is still running. "Clearly, it's about exposure," says Nell Pepe, artistic director of the Atlantic Theater Company, whose Beauty Queen of Leenane is racing Art, Freak, and Golden Child for this season's title. The most bankable exposure, of course, would come from finishing first. -KC

<b>t</b>	ROADWAY TOP 2:5	RECEIPTS RECEIPTS	ATTERGANCE	ATR. TRACET TRACE	7(273. 74 8472
1	RAGTIME (TM)	876,029	99.3%	\$61	137
2	THE LION KING (TM)	804,308	100.8%	\$57	213
3	THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA (TC)	703,196	94.3%	\$58	4,325
4	CHICAGO (TC)	674,798	99.8%	\$58	627
	TITANIC (TM)	600,939	88.5%	\$58	437
6	DISNEY'S BEAUTY AND THE BEAST (TAI)	589,871	76.1%	\$54	1,706
7	RENT (TM)	553,592	101.9%	\$58	858
8	THE SOUND OF MUSIC (TC)	527,704	80.3%	\$58	77
	LES MISERABLES (TC)	500,210	93.2%	\$47	4,599
10	HIGH SOCIETY (TC)	456,296	68%	\$52	23
THE .	MISS SAIGON (TC)	438,368	71%	\$44	2,958
12	ART (20)	429,038	96.4%	\$52	89
13	JEKYLL & HYDE (TC)	404,656	80,7%	\$59	440
14	THE SCARLET PIMPERNEL (TM)	374.756	69%	\$46	217
15	CATS (TC)	361,669	68.6%	\$44	6,517
16	SMOKEY JOE'S CAFE (TC)	341,430	75.7%	\$47	1,333
17	THE JUDAS KISS (TU)	335,144	86.4%	\$48	19
18	BRING IN 'DA NOISE,	333,478	83.5%	\$47	851
	BRING IN 'DA FUNK (TC)				
29	THE BEAUTY QUEEN OF LEENANE (TC)	325,426	90.7%	\$48	29
20	WAIT UNTIL DARK (T3f)	312,366	80.1%	\$47	49
21	1778 (TM)	287,177	56.9%	\$33	301
22	FOREVER TANGO (TC)	231,152	59.6%	\$30	376
23	THE LIFE (TC)	219,266	57.7%	\$44	434
24	CABARET (TC)	215,841	100%	\$53	69
25	FREAK (TC)	209,876	B1.3%	\$34	95

SOURCE: VARIETY, WEEK OF MAY IN IT, 1988 ATTEMPANCE PRACESTAGE INCLUDES STARDING-ROOM TIGART SALES.



# Shore Things

Whether you'll be hangin' at the beach, the mountains, a lake, or in the city this summer, there are plenty of cool paperbacks guaranteed to take your mind off the steamy weather. by Alexandra Jacobs

I MUST CONFESS, THE whole concept of "summer reading" troubles me. Is it something one does while sprawled across a chaise longue, nibbling greedily on bonbons? I've never been exactly sure what a chaise longue looks like.

Or is it homework for grown-ups, as those who lugged around last year's prestige beach read, Thomas Pynchon's Mason & Dixon, are surely convinced? Now that this thick tome is out in paperback (Owl, \$17), no doubt n whole new wave of readers will thrill to its mastery of 18th-century dialect, its elusive allusions, its intermittent bits of verse. The rest of us can get a speedy sop of Great Literature by thumbing through Alain de Botton's How Proust Can Change Your Life (Vintage, \$12), a cerebral riff on the self-help genre.

But if you're serious about self-help, try Finding Serenity in the Age of Anxlety (Bantam, \$12.95), by Robert Gerzon, since anxiety is apparently the mental disorder of the moment, nosing out depression by a hair. If Gerzon's soothing ministrations prove a little too Deepak Chopra, you can always enter The Last Party: Studio 54, Disco, and the Culture of the Night (Quill, \$15), by Anthony Haden-Guest, only to emerge (a) smug that you never engaged in such brain cellsucking bacchanalia and (b) well prepared for the two hot summer flicks about Studio 54. Speaking of hot summer flicks, since you're only going to be able to see **Lolita** if you have Showtime, the Sundance Channel, or a plane ticket to Europe, what about revisiting Vladmir Nabokov's novel (Vintage, \$13), an achievement that no filmmaker can

BLUSTPATION BY DANIEL TORRES



ever hope to surpass anyway?

While we're on the subject of movies, don't let Wendy Wasserstein's sorry script of The Object of My Affection dissuade you from the delightful Stephen McCauley novel upon which it was based (Pocket, \$6.99). And while we're on the subject of New Yorkers adapting for Hollywood, don't let Amy Ephron's tepid novelistic reheat of A Cup of Tea (Ballantine, \$10), derived from the Katherine Mansfield short story of the same name and also headed for the big screen, dissuade you from discovering the marvelous Mansfield; a good intro is The Garden Party and Other Stories (Penguin, \$10.95).

Short stories are flourishing nowadays in the hands of spry Southern writer Tim Gautreaux, whose Same Place, Same Things (Picador, \$11) features small men with big problems; ditto for the gloomily absorbing Richard Ford, who transplants a like motif to Paris and Montana in Women With Men (Vintage, \$12), three almost-novellas. Different place (Manhattan's Lower East Side), very different things (film stars, fashion, Fran Lebowitz), equally captivating: the delicate prose madeleines of urbane Quentin Crisp's Resident Alien: The New York Diarles (Alyson,

\$11.95). And if you find the \$12.95) with David Sedaris in his dry, funny, brilliant antimemoir of growing up gay and cynical-or with kooky Deborah Boliver Boehm as she recollects A Zen Romance (Kodansha, \$14) at a Japanese monastery in the '60s?

While memoirs may be on the ebb, every summer has its thick, memorable biographies: If you're not having An Affair to Remember (Avon, \$7.99). you might as well be reading about one, and it might as well be Katharine Hepburn and Spencer Tracy's, courtesy of the ever-persistent, perpetually silky Christopher Andersen. Stoics can tuck into A.M. Sperber and Eric Lax's meaty portrait of Humphrey Bogart (Quill, \$16) or brood over the communicationsindustry kingpins profiled in Ken Auletta's The Highwaymen (Harcourt Brace, \$13). As for that infamous Jerry Oppenheimer book that Hamptonites were hiding behind their Pynchon book jackets last year-well, let's just say that Martha Stewart: Just Desserts is far easier to whip in and out of a tote bag now that it's in softcover (Avon, \$6.99).

And while the word "desserts" still hangs in the sultry air, check out the toothsome morsels in Paula H. Deen's The Lady & Sons Savannah Country Cookbook (Random House, \$14.95), which bears John Berendt's stamp of approval, if that means anything: peach cobbler, strawberry shortcake, and something vaguely chocolate-themed called "Better Than Sex? Yes!"

At least I've got a handle on the bon-bon situation.

# Naked Civil Servant too gentle, why not get just plain Naked (Back Bay,

The inside scoop on the book world



■ DISCO INFERNO He loves the nightlife: Whit Stillman, writer-director of the 1990 preppy cult-classic film Metropolitan and the justopened The Last Days of Disco, has signed with Farrar Straus & Giroux to write a first novel called... The Last Days of Disco. "He felt he couldn't explore all the issues he wanted

to in the screenplay," explains his agent, Lynn Nesbit. "It is a sort of backward deal," admits FSG editor in chief Jonathan Galassi, who bought the as-yet-unwritten work of fiction for an undisclosed sum after seeing some examples of Stillman's prose

■ MERGE OVERKILL Twenty-six authors from the A list of American publishing-including Jane Smiley, Kurt Vonnegut, Peter Maas, Joyce Carol Oates, E.L. Doctorow, Art Buchwald, Joseph Heller, Carl Bernstein, and Annie Dillard-have sent a letter to the Federal Trade Commission protesting the Bertelsmann-Random House merger. Says Bernstein, "I'm somewhat skeptical that ownership [of all these imprints] by one entity will maintain the competitive economics of the business." Responds Bertelsmann spokesman Stuart Applebaum: "There will be no lessening of diversity. And all this free-floating anxiety about what might happen in not relevant [to the FTC]."

■ THE KISS-OFF Choosing a cover for the paperback version of Kathryn Harrison's The Kiss-the author's account of her adult affair with her father-proved a dellcate situation for Bard. the new Avon imprint that's striving for an upscale, literary Image. Random House had obscured the author's face on the hardback's front cover (she was pictured as a child with her father), and Bard editors initially planned a similarly understated cover, using a small stock photo of an anonymous feminine face with eyes modestly downcast. But according to a source, Harrison scotched the discreet design, selecting instead a glamorous, windblown shot of herself used in Dutch editions. "It was a joint decision. I don't think it's that unusual to have an author on the cover of a memoir," says Avon editor in chief Jennifer Hershey. -AJ and Matthew Flamm

COVER GIRL Kiss author Harrison

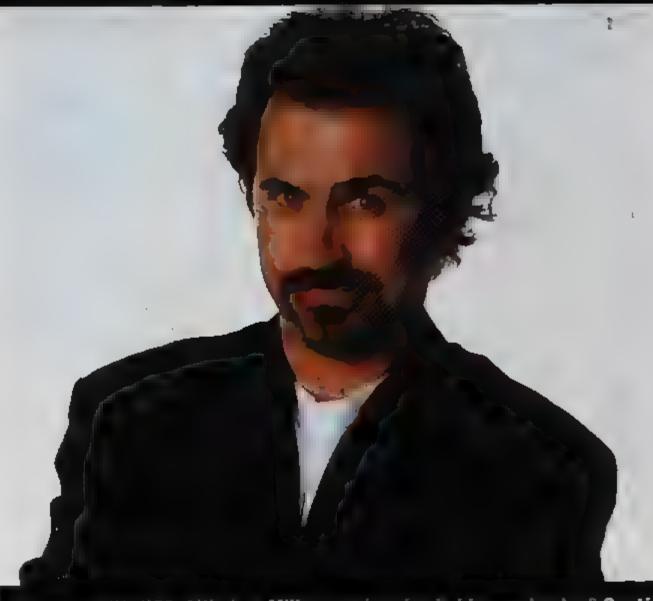
# The Week

#### Nonfiction

RANTING AGAIN Dennis Miller (Doubleday, \$21.95) In his second volume of rants, Miller beats a few dead horses (the O.J. trial and animal rights) but also sounds off on au courant social issues with sidesplitting insolence. On dating online: "I'll take the clap over carpal tunnel syndrome any day." On Sen. Al D'Amato: "Allowing this guy to chair an ethics committee is like having Kevorkian teach you the Heimlich maneuver." On Queen Elizabeth II: "a hood ornament in a bad hat." Although some of these rants sound like smart, if predictable, liberal/libertarian editorials studded with gag lines, Miller is one of the few thinking-person's comics-even when he does bathroom humor. B+ -Margot Mifflin

THE TIME OF OUR TIME Norman Maiier (Random House, \$39.50) Not the Best of Mailer or the Essential Mailer, this is an often mesmerizing attempt to reflect the times through the distorting mirror of the writer's own intense preoccupations during the 50 years since his first novel, The Naked and the Dead. The fiction, nonfiction, journalism, speeches, debates, and one TV transcript (the 1971 confrontation with Gore Vidal on Dick Cavett) are arranged in chronological order by subject matter, so early Mailer and late Mailer rub elbows when they are describing, say, Watergate. As this anthology makes clear, he's barked up a few wrong trees: Hipsters and graffiti weren't ever going to save us from corporate blandness, bad architecture, stale politics, and stifled sex. But no observer has had a keener instinct for the essences of politicians' characters or for the textures of celebrated and marginal American lives, and no contemporary American writer has been less willing to say only what it is safe —L.S. Klepp to say. A

THE BEST AMERICAN MOVIE WRITING 1998 George Plimpton, Ed. (St. Martin's Griffin, \$14.95) A veritable multiplex of sharp prose, this inaugural edition of a welcome antholo-



DENNIS, ANYONEP SNL alum Miller cracks wise in his new book of Ranting

gy series offers 22 nonfiction entertainments-profiles, reviews, reportage, memoirs, and meditations. Intellectual heavy hitters weigh in on varied topics (Garry Wills compares Oliver Stone to Dostoyevsky, Susan Sontag discusses the death of cinephilia), while less heady but equally insightful pieces include Plimpton's whimsical portrait of Warren Beatty and Edward Field's tales of cruising at seedy theaters. Steven Spielberg, quoted for the book's epigraph, notes that

"the next best thing to seeing

movies is reading about them." It's worth elaborating that essays like these help us see more clearlynot merely by shaping our opinions of movies but by deepening our love of them. A -Troy Patterson

#### **Fiction**

HEMINGWAY'S CHAIR Michael Palin (St. Martin's, \$23.95) In this witty first novel by former Monty Python member Palin, thirtysomething Martin Sproale, the assistant postmaster in an English coastal

A COMPILATION OF 'ROTTEN REVIEWS' OF GOOD BOOKS

## WHAM SLAM, NO THANK YOU, MA'AM

LL THE WORLD loves a pan, and now there's a bible of bad press, brutal brush-offs, and woefully erroneous literary siams. Rotten Reviews & Rejections (Pushcart Press) rolls three recent popular books-Rotten Reviews, Rotten Reviews II, and Rotten Rejections-into a venomous volume spiked with nasty new additions. Nothing and no one is sacred, from Moby Dick, deemed "so much trash belonging to the worst school of Bedlam literature" to Tony Hillerman, who got a rejection letter urging him to "get rid of all that Indian stuff" in The Biessing Way.

"I published Rotten Reviews because I was so angry about a review of a book I dearly loved that I was contemplating violence," says Pushcart publisher Bill

Henderson. "Finally, I decided to get back at them by laughter." Henderson coedited the new volume with André Bernard, an editor at Harcourt Brace.

The book's most perversely pleasurable entries show famous writers trashing...famous writers: Zola slams Baudelaire, Emerson reviles Austen, and George Bernard Shaw calls Shakespeare's Othel-



lo"pure melodrama [without] a touch of characterization that goes below the skin." This, after the play had enjoyed nearly three centuries of critical kudos.

While most of the literary floggings in the latest volume were culled from biographies, the editors collected many recent examples directly from writers. "They had to be good sports about itit's a painful business," says Henderson. And it shows. In a letter to the editors, Erica Jong confesses that a cruel review of Fear of Flying in 1974 broke her heart.

But for classics such as Tolstoy's Anna Karenina ("sentimental rubbish") or Thomas Pynchon's The Crying of Lot 49 ("a curiously dead novel"), Edna St. Vincent Millay's words apply: "A person who publishes a book willfully appears before the populace with his pants down.... If it is a good book nothing can hurt him. If it is a bad book, nothing can help him." —MM

ILLUSTRATION BY MARK MATCHO.

DXYMORON OF THE WEEK

### **'Great Fashion** Designs of the **Eighties Paper**

\*Tom Tierney's cutouts for Dover Publications feature purple and teal; spangles, poufy skirts; culottes.... Maybe someday this stuff will seem cool again, but not yet. And maybe never-

village, seems a mousy, harmless bloke. But Martin's secret obsession with Ernest Hemingway leads him to compose curt prose on a vintage typewriter and collect Hem memorabilia like old boxing gloves. When a smooth city suit full of nefarious modernizing schemes receives the promotion to head postmaster that Martin deserved, our hero-with "Papa" as muse-learns how to swagger for what he believes in Throughout,

Palin's empathetic humor informs this perceptive tribute to the art of manliness, A- -Megan Harlan

ROXANNA SLADE Reynolds Price (Scribner, \$25) It's probably inevitable that, as we near the end of the century, novels will appear with centenarians at their center; the chance to tell the story of the last hundred years through a life that spanned them is simply too neat to pass up. And so it is with this, the 28th work from Reynolds Price, bard of the Southern backwoods. If Price's choice of heroine is unsurprising, his choice of subject matter is not: Instead of taking his main character, 94-year-old Roxanna, to the front of world wars and the heart of the technological revolution, he leaves her relatively uninformed, as typical of her time and place (rural North Carolina) as one could imagine. The epiphanies and upsets of her life are wholly personal. It's a life that is quiet-and quietly enthralling. B+ -Vanessa V. Friedman

THE ODD SEA Frederick Reiken (Harcourt Brace, \$22) This deft fictional debut is a portrait of the artist as an ordinary small-town kid. Narrator Philip Shumway is 13 when his older brother, Ethan, a musical prodigy, vanishes. Grief and longing send the Shumways, a family of quiet underachievers from the Massachusetts Hilltowns, on an odyssey (or "odd sea" as the baby of the family calls it) of self-discovery. Reiken delineates the family dynamic in pithy. poignant scenes that keep you turning pages, but once Philip comes of age, the spare New England parable bogs down in self-conscious talk about art and life. Philip becomes a writer, poor Ethan remains just a literary symbol. **B**—Suzanne Ruta ------

>> More reviews in EW Special Edition at www.ew.com < <

THE BROWSER

Opening lines from recently published books

Was going to be late. A fat woman in a quilted brown:parka—she looked like a walking onlon—had kept everyone waiting in the heavy snow at Ninety-sixth and Broadway while she argued with the driver." From DANIEL MENAKER's nove The Treatment (Knopf: \$23)

The cold hard light of a December dawn hung heavily over Nantucket Sound, turning the sea opaque and alien. It clung to the church spires and curled like smoke along the gray-shingled eaves of the huddled houses. From Death in ocold Hand Light (Bantam \$23:95); the fourth Merry Folgen detective novel from FRANCINE MATHEWS

BEST-SELLERS

### MAN OF THE 'YEAR'

OHN IRVING has long displayed a penchant for weird, wordy titles. The 158-Pound Marriage. Trying to Save Piggy Sneed. A Prayer for Owen Meany. Setting Free the Bears. What's that all about? God only knows, but the Garp grouples have turned out in full force to pick up the weight-lifting, wrestling writer's newest (with the book at 537 pages, let's hope



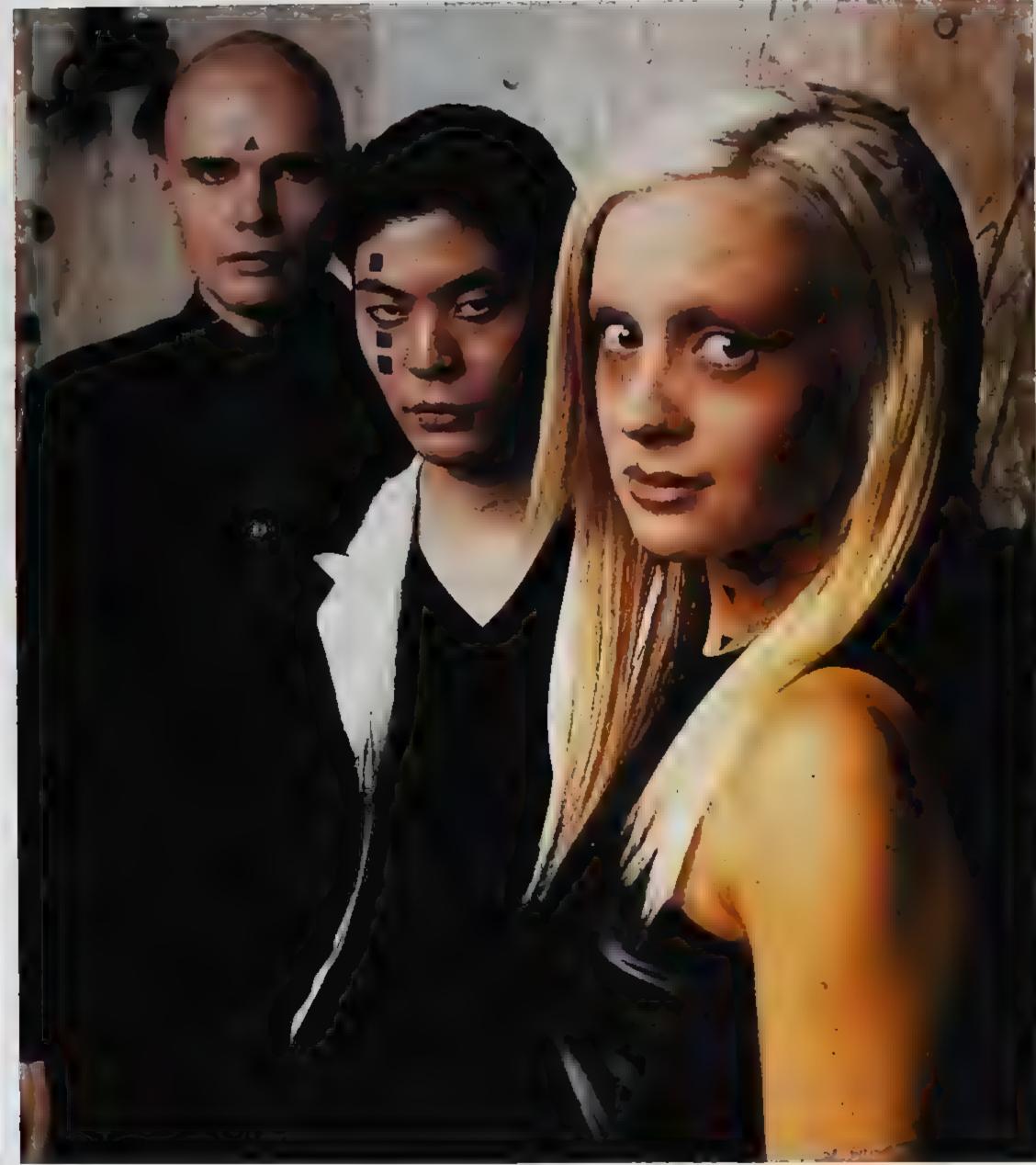
they're in as good shape as he), which is currently exercising a choke hold on far flightier fare. After three pressruns, A Widow for One Year (see what we mean?) has 265,000 copies in print.

#### FICTION

	ALEEN OF I
1	A WIDOW FOR ONE YEAR John Irving, Random House, \$27.95
2	YOU BELONG TO ME Mary Higgins Clark, Simon & Schuster, \$25 5
а	N IS FOR NOOSE Sue Grafton, Henry Holt, \$25
4	SECRET PREY John Sandford, Putnam. \$24.95
5	MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE Nicholas Sparks, Warner, \$20
6	THE STREET LAWYER John Grisham, Doubleday, \$27.95
7	BLACK AND BLUE Anna Quindlen, Random House, \$23
8	THE LONG ROAD HOME Danielle Steel, Delacorte, \$25.95
9	CITIES OF THE PLAIN (BORDER TRILOGY, VOL. 3)  Cormae McCarthy, Knopf, \$25
10	PANDORA Anne Rice, Knopf, \$19.95
N	ONFICTION
1	IN THE MEANTIME I yanla Vanzant, Simon & Schuster, \$25
2	TUESDAYS WITH MORRIE Mitch Albom, Doubleday, \$19.95
3	STILL ME Christopher Reeve, Random House, \$25
4	THE 9 STEPS TO FINANCIAL FREEDOM Suze Orman, Crosen, \$23.
6	SIMPLE ABUNDANCE Sarah Ban Breathnach, Warner, 220
6	WE ARE OUR MOTHERS' DAUGHTERS
7	The MILLIONAIRE NEXT DOOR Thomas J. Stanley and William D. Danko, Longstreet, \$22
8	TALKING TO HEAVEN James Van Praagh, Dutton, \$22,95
9	ANGELA'S ASHES Frank McCourt, Scribner, \$24 89
OF	Sugar Busters: H. Leighton Steward, Merrison C. Bethea
64	ASS-MARKET PAPERBACKS

- 1	THE HOUSE WHISPEREN INICHORAS EVANS, Dell. \$7.50
2	Robert C. Atkins, M.D., Aron, \$6.50
3	PRETEND YOU DON'T SEE HER Mary Higgins Clark, Pocket, \$7.99
4	INTO THIN AIR Jon Krakauer, Anchor, \$7.99
5	BUTTERFLY (THE ORPHANS) V.C. Andrews, Pocket, \$5.99
6	Tom Clancy and Steve R. Pieczenik, Berkley, \$7.50
7	PLUM ISLAND Nelson DeMille, Warner, \$7.99
8	UP ISLAND Anne Rivers Siddons, HarperPaperbacks, \$6 99
9	SANCTUARY Nora Roberts, Jove, \$7.50
10	COMANCHE MOON Larry McMurtry, Pocket, \$7,99

BOURCE- PURE WHERE WELL!



# Small Bang Theory

Adore, Smashing Pumpkins' follow-up to the fiery Mellon Collie and the Infinite Sadness, replaces bellow with mellow. by David Browne

tious double album, an arena tour, millions of records sold—after everything that defines all-encompassing rock & roll world conquest—the Smashing Pumpkins reenter our lives not with a bang but with a whimper. "Twilight

fades through blistered avalon," serenades Billy Corgan, accompanied by fragile acoustic-guitar fingerpicking, on "To Sheila," the first track of **Adore**. It's hard to imagine a more muted introduction for the official follow-up to 1995's sprawling Mellon Col-

lie and the Infinite Sadness.

Even when a distant beat and spectral banjo waft into the song, it still feels like one of those pleasant morsels

NEXT OF PUMPKINS The once smashing quartet is now down to a trio: Corgan, Iha, and D'Arcy Corgan or band mate James Iha would have relegated to a Pumpkins B side.

The intimacy and restraint of "To Sheila" set the tone for the most lowkey album the Pumpkins have ever made. Everything, from the tempos to the rhythms to Corgan's wail, has been taken down u notch. Ballads and mid-tempo songs prevail, many of them exceedingly delicate and pretty, nudged along by ticktocking drum machines and fragile pianos. The album should carry a new style of advisory sticker: "Warning: Explicitly Lyrical." Even when the band pumps up the volume—on the first single, "Ava Adore," about a love that will tear you apart; the tightly coiled "Daphne Descends"; or "Perfect," whose skipping-stone beat

recalls "1979"—the dramatic flourishes are played down, if no less effective. The careening rockers on *Mellon Collie* felt as if they could knock down buildings; the ones on *Adore* want to sneak in through the back door.

None of this means either Corgan or his fellow Pumpkins have mellowed. Corgan barely raises his voice to the angsty caterwaul that makes people either love him or hate him, but his voice and lyrics remain unsettled and unsettling. Pretty on the outside, the album is dark and

obsessive beneath; let's call | it passive-aggressive rock. Repeating the line "you were never meant to belong to me" in "Crestfallen," Corgan comes off less like a lovelorn man than a creepy stalker. Other songs touch upon his feelings for his mother ("Once Upon a Time") and a loved one's death in a car accident (the terrific gothic bolero "Tear"). All of them are saved from treacly sentimentality by the harsh, adenoidal sharpness of Corgan's singing.

Adore is admirable in its consistency. It feels like one

**Smashing** 

Pumpkins

extended, mellon-collie ballad, and some of its songs—"For Martha," about the recent death of Corgan's mother, and the surrealisticanimal-farm piano meditation "Annie-Dog"—are among his most pulchritudinous

melodies. Yet that very uniformity works against the record. The unwavering nature of the arrangements leads to some tracks melting into, or canceling out, each other. Also, by depriving themselves of their sonic wallop, the Pumpkins wind up sounding a little ordinary—just another rock band crafting soul-purging, semi-unplugged ballads.

In one regard, that may be the point. Adore could be a reaction to the grandeur of Mellon Collie and the Infinite Sadness. If the band continued on that track, after all, they could have wound up as their generation's Yes, meandering into the ether. But the hushed tone of Adore can also be interpreted as a response to the pitfalls of the rock fame the Pumpkins sought so eagerly. Eddie Vedder and Kurt Cobain were right: Celebrity

and success are II bitch, and all Vedder has to do is quickly scan the battlefield to have his deepest fears confirmed. The alt-rock world, or what's left of it, is littered with drug casualties (most prominently Scott Weiland) and bands decimated by ego and excess (Alice in Chains, Stone Temple Pilots); Pearl Jam themselves are on their fourth drummer. Once it became a financial boom, Lollapalooza lost its edge and sense of purpose. Even when musicians aimed for and achieved a knockout peak, they seemed shaken by it; after Soundgarden made

Superunknown, for instance, they coughed up one more record and then disbanded.

The Pumpkins have not been exempt from these travails: Yes, they pulled off a double CD, and quite magnificently, but they

also succumbed to rock-world traps both silly (Iha's forgettable solo album) and tragic (former drummer Jimmy Chamberlin's drug addiction and the heroinrelated death of their touring keyboardist, Jonathan Melvoin). For all we know, Corgan hasn't been affected by any of it and is currently lounging about a mansion, being fed grapes by groupies. But the scaled-back, antirock sensibility that permeates Adore reads like an act of selfpreservation. It's the sound of a band pausing, glancing around the landscape, and wondering where they should venture next: a holding action for a time when holding onto reality has never been so urgent. B+

# HEAR ENOW. This week on the music beat

■ CAUGHT STEALING? Ex-Porno for Pyros frontman Perry Farrell may have never meant to become a porn star, but an adultentertainment company had its own ideas. In federal court May 14, the rocker obtained a temporary restraining order restricting website Spy7 and parent company Fairchild Kirby from disseminating a sex-and-syringe-filled Farrell home video. A \$90 million lawsuit filed by Farrell's attorney Edwin McPherson contends a tape "depicting him and his girlfriend at the time engaged in various explicit sexual and intimate relations" was "apparently stolen from Plaintiff's home." in response, Spy7 says Farrell must be thinking of another video, because theirs has him being gratified by two women-and he signed a release granting them full rights to distribute it. McPherson, who just subpoensed a copy of Spy7's video, now agrees that it is different from the one described in the suit, but argues that the signature on Spy?'s release "appears to be a forgery."

Though sex figures on Spy?'s tape, "the brunt of it is a Sid and Nancy-type situation," says operations manager Bill Green, describing a "wasted" Farrell and female companion "rambling and carrying on in the back of a limo." Green says the woman had left ex-Jane's Addiction leader Farrell for another member of that group, then returned to him, inspiring Farrell to make the wides with the intention of that the wides with the intention of the start of the st

to make the video with the intention of sending it to the bandmate. Instead, he gave it to another party, allegedly saying "You can probably

make some money with it." Green won't name the recipient, but McPherson says Fairchild Kirby is owned by private eye Frank

Monte, who once worked for Farrell.

The needles may fall under the category "Nothing's Shocking," given Farrell's frankness about enjoying drugs. But why give it away? "If you knew the guy," offers Green, "you'd realize that sometimes he just signs anything." But McPherson—

(who's currently also representing Bret Michaels in his sex-video suit) claims it's just the latest case he's

had to deal with of a private investigator peddling celebrity sex.
"They seem to do well at this business, somehow." — Chris Williman

PERRY ANGRY Fell into the hands of a private eye

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# Two If by 'See'

On If You See Him and If You See Her, Reba and Brooks & Dunn join forces to defend their country

If You See

If You See

LAST YEAR, REBA McEntire and Brooks & Dunn, two of Nashville's most venerable acts, took a look at country's declining box office and did something smart: They teamed up for a coheadlining tour that gave Garth Brooks a run for his money.

Now, with their second joint outing nearly & DUNN under way, come their new albums, Reba's II You See Him and Brooks & Dunn's If You See Her, each named after the duet single "If

You See Him/If You See Her" that appears on both records. With that, the similarity ends.

The single is really more Reba's than Brooks & Dunn's A big, bombastic ballad, it's representative of the almost wholly adult-contemporary heartache songs that make up her album. Furthermore, the story-former lovers confiding their still-smoldering passion to a mutual friend—is



SOAP DISH Reba, queen of the melodrama

right out of the afternoon soaps. Perhaps by design. Reba, the only woman in the country who can get six syllables out of the word "him," seems less interested in pure music than in boosting her acting career. Two songs, "Forever Love" and "All This Time," will appear in her TV movie scheduled for this fall.

Where Reba overplays her angst, Ronnie Dunn internalizes his. That serves him well on B&D's surpris-

ingly muscular, diverse clutch of songs, which weaken only when Kix Brooks takes his solo turns. Otherwise, B&D are inspired on the waltz of Roger Miller's "Husbands and Wives," the Westernswing jitterbug of Brooks and Bob DiPiero's "Way Gone," and the gritty morality tale "Born and Raised in Black and White,"

Through the years, B&D

have evolved from trendy line-dance heroes to crafters of commercial, soulful country, while Reba has embraced a hermetically sealed brand of artificial country-pop. With so many other females now challenging her on the charts, Reba might do well to try something really bold: Explore her country roots with a vengeance. Him: C+ Her: B+ —Alanna Nash



# About 'Faces'

After a couple of wayward trip-hop experiments, Tricky returns to heavenly form on Angels

WHEN THE ENIGmatic lull of trip-hop became the Muzak of choice for cafés and boutiques, no one appeared more horrified than one of its auteurs. Tricky's 1995 Maxinquaye defined trip-hop, but the albums he re-

leased after it-from collections of rap and drum-andpoems to 1996's Maxinquaye Xerox, Pre-Millennium Tension-found him dodging or muddying up his own trademarks. As daring as those records were, none were as good as Maxinquaye-a problem Tricky's finally corrected with Angels With Dirty Faces.

Angels retains the same woozy, hypnotic trance of his earlier work, with Tricky and longtime collaborator Martina Topley-Bird mumbling, muttering, nodding off, and occasionally even singing. (They sound as if it's the morning after a British awards ceremo-



ny.) But the record also feels more adventurous, rhythmically and musically, than its predecessors. Break beats and rubbery jazz rhythms are woven into the tracks. Tricky also pulls off audacious moves like

the mutant funk of "Singing the Blues" and "Broken Homes," a gothic art-gospel set piece featuring an unusually fluid Polly Jean Harvey.

Verbally, Tricky mostly indulges in fidgety rants about deadly rap feuds, the media, and the corrupting ways of success. But lyrics have never been Tricky's pull, as he himself advises in "Analyze Me" ("For all those who want to analyze me/Start it off in the hips"). It's his mix of the quiet and the disquieting, a balance he's again preserved on this alluring sonic blur. A

RED CORNER A neat Tricky (above)

IMAGINE HEAT MAKING YOUR HAIR HEALTHY. THERMASILK THERMASILK INTRODUCING THERMASILK" HEAT ACTIVATED SHAMPOO AND CONDITIONER. Now, whenever you use heat to style pu'll activate ThermaSilk's revolutionary protein formula. It actually improves the condition of your hair, leaving it looking and feeling healthier. NEW THERMASILK. WHERE THERE'S HEAT, THERE'S HEALTHY HAIR.

# The Week

#### Singles

BRANDY AND MONICA "The Boy is Mine" (Atlantic) No. this isn't an estrogen flip on the Michael Jackson hit. Nor is it the soul-sista catfight that the pairing of these teendream divas-in-training promised (the too-silky production delivers a TKO to any gritty R&B tension). Still, child star Brandy sings like a woman for the first time, making her potential for an adult career à la Toni Braxton a distinct -Matt Diehl possibility. C+

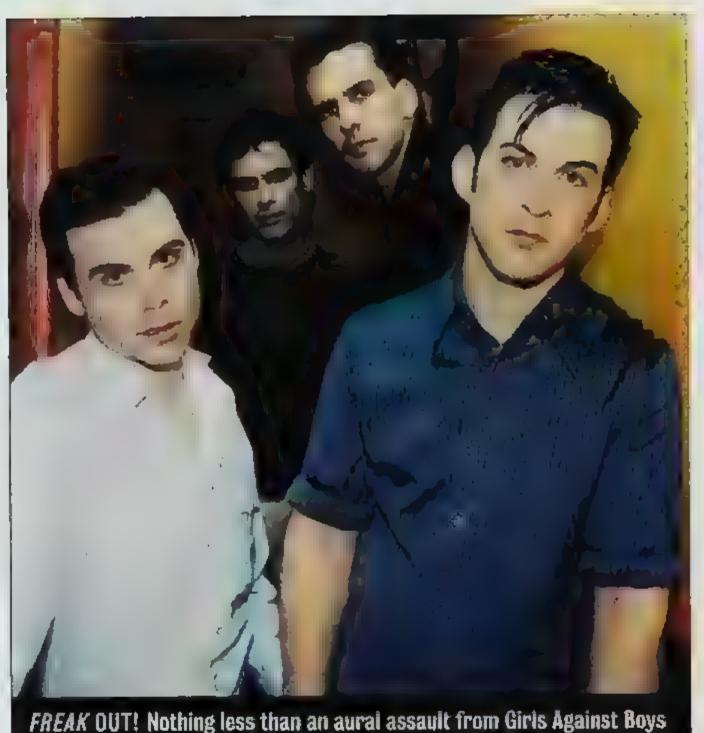
#### Pop/Rock

ROD STEWART When We Were the New Boys (Warner Bros.) When Rod was a new boy was a quarter century ago, and it's never been so evident as on the modern-rock covers that constitute a large chunk of his umpteenth album. Though Stewart's randy rasp can still marvel and move, he can't help but turn Oasis' "Cigarettes and Alcohol" and Primal Scream's "Rocks" into hammy, irony-challenged show-

biz rock (or Ron Sexsmith's "Secret Heart" into banal, moviesoundtrack fodder). Only a gripping version of Skunk Anansie's "Weak" beats the original. It could have been worse, though: Rod could have gone techno.  $\mathbf{G}$  —DB

GIRLS AGAINST BOYS Freak\*On\*Ica (Geffen) On its major-label debut, this New York quartet tones down its sweaty sex-boy image for an even more brutal urban-noise apocalypse. Post-punk guitars and industrial-strength electronica rhythms duel throughout a funky dystopia that's GVSB's most mesmerizing collection yet, while singer Scott McCloud spews his evocatively dissolute lyrics with a growl that fits the album's sci-fi deca-dance perfectly. It's catchy, too: If the brooding "Roxy" isn't the alt-rock hit of the summer, there's no justice. A-

XSCAPE Traces of My Lipstick (Columbia) With their third album, Xscape have learned what every old bluesman already knows: Infi-



delity makes good grist for a torchy slice of soul music. Still, this is the '90s, so the girls croon lines like "Everyone Cheats" with pure nonchalance and save their tender, surrendering coos for ballads like "Am I Dreamin'." Traces is aided

by the group's longtime guru and hip-hop hook man, Jermaine -Cheo Tychimba Dupri. B

GLORIA ESTEFAN Gloria! (Epic) Not since 1987 has Cuba's crossover queen made an album so unre-

RADIO ACTIVE

## IMBRUGLIA WE TRUST: GOING GOO GOO GAGA

THREE MADIO-STATION music directors discuss their top songs and predict hits to be:

PAUL "CUBBY" BRYANT, Z100, New York (Top 40) ■ "Torn," Natalie Imbruglia: "The song's catchy, so it doesn't matter if you're male or female. And it doesn't hurt that she's pretty cute." # "You're Still the One," Shanla Twain: "When we first played it we got calls saying, 'Oh, my God, you're playing country.' But the more you hear it, the more you realize it's a pop record. It's not that twangy." ■ "All My Life," K-Cl & Jojo: "It'll be a big wedding song this summer, It goes to show how important lyrics are. Without the lyrics, the song would be dead in the water." One to watch: "I Don't Want to Miss a Thing," Aerosmith: "I guarantee it'll be No. 1 in two months. It's from a movie that's gonna be huge [Armageddon] and this song plays a key part in it."

RICH WALL, WEDG, Buffalo (Alternative) "Iris," Goo Goo Dolls: "It's from City of Angels. The lyrics tie in nicely with the movie. And [the band is] from Buffalo, so that's even better." ■ "Beautiful Disaster," 311: "People didn't give 311 a chance with this record, but this song has gotten strong results. It has a real hypnotic guitar solo." # "My Hero," Foo Fighters: "it's



with it. It's the album's best song so far." One to watch: "What I Didn't Know," Athenaeum: "Really accessible power-pop, almost reminiscent of Rick Springfield." SHADOW, WWKA, Orlando, Fla. (Country) "I Just Want to Dance With You," George Strait: "He's George Strait. He could sing the Yellow Pages." ■ "If You See Him/If You See Her," Reba McEntire and Brooks & Dunn: "If there's a sure thing for the Country Music Association awards this year, this is it." ■ "One of These Days," Tim Mc-Graw: "About a guy who was ridiculed at school and said, 'One of these days you're gonna love me.' Then in the final verse he says, 'One of these days I'm gonna love me." One to watch: "From This Moment On," Shanla Twain and Bryan White: "It'll probably cross all the barriers and become a pop hit. She's following LeAnn Rimes. Kaching, ka-ching, you know?" —Rob Brunner

still cranking. If the song connects, we stick

#### Will Smith

On their new CD, The A Files: Alien Songs, Alvin & Co. leave their fresh prints all over the Fresh Prince, giving the jiggy rapper's "Men in Black" theme the classic. squeaky treatment.

lenting in its fusion of disco with salsa. Despite its laudable lack of ballads, Gloria! never quite matches the Copacabana catchiness of Miami Sound Machine's bubbliest old hits. But tracks like "Lucky Girl" and the ominously undulating "Cuba Libre" reach for the skies like a missilecrisis fiesta thrown by Donna —Chuck Eddy Summer. **B** 

**BUDDY GUY Heavy Love** (Silvertone) Blues wild man Guy tones down the fretboard fireworks on his most consistent effort since 1991's Danin Right, Fre Got the Blues, focusing instead on tight songs, concise, off-kilter solos, funk-tinged grooves, and impassioned vocals. The 62-year-old still burns with a teenager's fire, gleefully showing 17-year-old Jonny Lang the ropes on "Midnight Train" and investing even the few flat tunes with enough energy to power a small town, B+ -Alan Paul

STEGOSAURUS Stegosaurus (Reprise) This striking debut conjures up a musical place where rock, country, post-grunge, and folk converge. Singer-songwriter Jesse Rhodes finds a keen, memorable balance between the quirky pop hook of "Candy," the naturalism of "Trees," the punk punch of "Go-Cart Man," and the twang of "Long Way to Fresno." He coos and hollers, deftly mixes acoustic-

and electric guitars, and leaves us with a literal purring sensation at the end. B+ -Josef Woodard

PERNICE BROTHERS Overcome by Happiness (Sub Pop) As the singer-guitarist for the defunct Scud Mountain Boys, Joe Pernice played slight, country-tinged literock. Now he's moved on to another overdone subgenre: stringladen retro-pop. This time, however, the results are surprisingly strong. His new band's elegant piano foundation, irony-free songwriting, and musical debt to Nick Drake and Brian Wilson make them sound like a Ben Folds Five for adults, A-

VERSUS Two Cents Plus Tax (Caroline) Always one of indie-rock's more tuneful outfits, Versus sound like Sonic Youth if the latter leveraged pop heartache over guitar abstructions. This set delivers both in n wistful song suite about post-cold war blues, romantic betrayal, and love so raw it makes you dizzy. Plus, on "Atomic Kid," you get what may be the catchiest reprise to feature the word "armageddon" ever recorded. A- -Will Hermes

#### Reissues

JANIS JOPLIN WITH BIG BROTHER AND THE HOLDING COMPANY Live at Winterland '68 (Columbia/Legacy) Joplin fans won't find any forgotten gems on this famous, beautifully recorded performance, but Big Brother, thrillingly raw and raunchy, emerges as one of the most unjustifiably maligned bands of the era. Still, it's Janis who raises goose burnps. When she launches into "I Need a Man to Love"all frayed vocal chords and splayed vulnerability-30 years disappear in one hallucinogenic heartbeat. B+ -AN

#### Jazz

**VARIOUS ARTISTS The Atlantic New** Orleans Jazz Sessions (Mosaic) Few Atlantic jazz albums were more valuable than the six made between 1955 and 1962, documenting traditional, ansembleoriented New Orleans jazz. The rreplaceable key players on these sets (gathered here by Mosaic on four CDs, with five previously unreleased tracks) are all dead now. Whether joyous or mournful, Percy and Willie Humphrey, Billie and De De Pierce, George Lewis, et al. opened their hearts. It's impossible not to respond. By mail order: (203) 327-7111 **A=** —Chip Deffaa

>> More reviews in EW Special Edition at www.ew.com < <

#### THE CHARTS

### 'HELL' ON WHEELS

T'S A UNIVERSALLY cheerful week for Universal—and not just because, with its acquisition of PolyGram, it's poised to become the world's biggest music conglomerate. One of the labels to be absorbed, Def Jam, claimed the top seller, DMX's It's Dark and Hell Is Hot, which didn't



exactly freeze over, at 251,000 units. Labels aiready among the Uni empire provided the next-highest debut, No. 3 Sparkle (146,000 copies), plus a No. 5 in the pocket from Eightball (120,000 units). Not that Universal claimed every top 10 comer: Sony could roar about its Godzilia soundtrack (No. 4, 140,000 copies sold), and Elektra sold way more than 10,000 of ex-Manlac Natalie Merchant's sophomore solo offering, Ophelia (No. 8, 102,000).

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	LET	WE:	r et				

	LÄST VE	EE PIEER ON ANALY
-1	-	DMX It's Dark and Hell Is Hot, Del Jam/Mercury
2	2	SOUNDTRACK City of Angels, Warner Sunset/Reprise
3	_	SPARKLE Sparkle, Rock Land/Interscope
4	_	SOUNDTRACK Godzilla, Sony Music Soundtrax
5	_	EIGHTBALL Lost, Suave House/Universal
6	1	GARTH BROOKS The Limited Series, Capitol
7	4	DAVE MATTHEWS BAND Before These Crowded Streets, RCA 4
8	_	NATALIE MERCHANT Ophiclia, Elektra
9	7	VONDA SHEPARD Songs From Ally McBeal, 550 Music 3
10	3	LEANN RIMES Sittin' on Top of the World, Curb

#### COUNTRY ALBUMS

1 1 GARTH BROOKS The Limited Series, Capital

		The state of the s
2	2	LEANN RIMES Sittin' on Top of the World, Curb
3	4	SHANIA TWAIN Come On Over, Mercury
- 4	3	GEORGE STRAIT One Step at a Time, MCA Nashville
5	- 8	FAITH HILL Faith, Warner Brost
6	6	GARTH BROOKS Sevens, Capitol
7		SOUNDTRACK Hope Floats, Capitol
8	6	TIM McGraw Everywhere, Curb
9	_	JEFF FOXWORTHY Totally Committed, Warner Bros
10		TERRI CLARK How I Feel, Mercury
	0.0	CATALOG ALBUMS

#### OP CATALOG ALBUMS

1	1	SOUNDTRACK Grease, Polydor	.261
2	2	FRANK SINATRA Reprise—The Very Good Years, Reprise	
3	6	FRANK SINATRA Greatest Hits!, Reprise	
4	3	METALLICA Metallica, Elektra	
5	8	FRANK SINATRA The Capital Collectors Series, Capital	
в	5	BOB MARLEY & THE WAILERS Legend, That Gong/Island	466
7	25	FRANK SINATRA The Best of the Capital Years, Capital .	2
8	7	DAVE MATTHEWS BAND Crash, RCA	108
9	4	CELINE DION Falling Into Von, 550 Music	
10	15	JIMMY BUFFETT Songs You Know by Heart, MCA	

Watch this kid bring new meaning to the term "home security."





# Mire Galling

Clint Eastwood's Midnight in the Garden...proves again that in the movies, writer is just another word for patsy. by Stephen Whitty

REPORTERS SWEAR THEY | are disinterested, detached, impartial, fair. And this much is true: The best try to be fair. But being fair is not being objective. Objective journalists have no feelings about their subjects, no opinions on the outcome. Fair journalists merely keep those emotions to themselves-and let those who disagree have equal time.

The fight between fact and feeling, deadline and duty is

served everything from screwball comedies (Nothing Sacred, It Happened One Night) to social-justice dramas (Meet John Doe, Salvador), But to use it, you have to see the moral dilemma.

Based on the true-fact bestseller by John Berendt, Clint Eastwood's Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil is a mystery. John Cusack's freshfaced John Kelso (who stands one made for the movies. It's in for Berendt) goes to Savan-

nah to cover an elegant party; he stays on when host Jim Williams (Kevin Spacey) puts several bullets into a rough-trade friend. Having expect-

ed a 500-word "literary postcard," Kelso now sees a bestseller. Getting out his note pad, he gets to work. But who character study disguised as a | is he working for? The movie's first big scene sends Kelso to Williams' lawyer, where he refuses to "compromise my

liams' story approval. the Garden c "It's a slippery slope," Kelso smugly tells the attorney. "As a profes-\$104.99 sional. I'm sure you un-RATED,R derstand." Kelso, how-Street Smar ever, proves he doesn't. 1907 understand. He lets \$12.99 Williams put him up NATED R and loan him clothes; when Williams' law-

ethics" by giving Wil-

yers suggest he join

the team as a sort of

investigator, Kelso

The Third Mai HOME VISION **FOR RENTAL** ÖNLY

sees no conflict at all. Neither, sadly, does Eastwood. Even after Kelso uncovers truths the court will never hear, the movie lets him slip down this ethical slope without comment. (Nor, probably, does Berendt, who has acknowledged amending some of

The Parties foregoing for President II, its and Original Reservoirs and a FACE of Herman Florid Coard P.O. Box (2013) Wintport CT 00888 IWA & VT Resident, may an interconnection of multiple parties of the President CT 00888 IWA & VT Resident, may an interconnection of the President CT 00888 IWA & VT Resident, may an interconnection of the President CT 00888 IWA & VT Resident, may an interconnection of the President CT 00888 IWA & VT Resident, may an interconnection of the President CT 00888 IWA & VT Resident CT 00888 IWA & VT Re

his book's facts.) But movies once turned on such questions. Entire dramas were once born of such quandaries.

Even shabby thrillers once knew the moral territory being mapped. Jerry Schatzberg's 1987 Street Smart is dressed up with an astonishing performance by Morgan Freeman and some brassy bursts from Miles Davis on the soundtrack. Look past those (and the murkiness of the film-to-tape transfer) and you can see u mere melodrama about an under-the-gun journalist who invents an interview-and then finds himself stalked by a criminal similar to the fabricated source.

Nothing rings true besides Freeman's ferocious pimp, Fast Black—not Kathy Baker's winsome hooker, nor Christopher Reeve's Harvardeducated freelancer. Yet at least Street Smart has a moral dimension, one large enough to include the dangers of identifying with your subjects and the everyday deceptions encouraged by slick magazines. (Reeve's editor, for example, insists he change some of his supposedly solid "facts"-because they don't fit his idea of the truth.) Even when it's not interested in exploring the issues, Street Smart at least asks some of the questions.

Cusack and Reeve play accomplished writers gone bad; in director Carol Reed's The Third Man (1949), Joseph Cotten plays Holly Martins, u mediocre one trying to go good. As director Reed tells it in the British version's voiceover narration, Martins is an author of cheap Westerns who's reduced to traveling to Vienna when his friend Harry Lime (Orson Welles, who wrote most of his own dialogue) offers him a job. And so the hack, when he discov-

ers his friend has died mysteriously, becomes an amateur detective.

But for all of his booze and boorishness—"only a scribbler with too much drink in him," Trevor Howard's English officer calls him—Martins soberly wrestles with the worries journalists encounter every day. Such as: Where do his loyalties lie? What are his responsibilities? And when everything he learns runs against everything he knows—what

does he believe?

Martins tries desperately to do the right thing and follow the facts rather than his feelings. Yet his sleuthing leads him to resurrect his poor dead friend, then betray him; his efforts to salvage something from this tragedy only turn him into that blackest villain of the McCarthy era, the informer. In the end, having gotten Martins to destroy Lime, Howard's officer leaves him by the side of the road. Having

nothing left to say to him, the love of his life walks past without turning her head.

Standing alone on an empty country avenue, kept company only by dead facts and falling leaves. This is where the truth can leave you. This is where taking a cold hard line on slippery questions can lead.

And this is a road that, these days, fewer and fewer movies travel. Midnight: C Street Smart: C+ The Third Man: A

# FASTFORWARD

The latest from the home-video front

made Twentieth Century Fox the last major studio holdout, Paramount announced April 27 that it would start issuing DVDs. The studio gave the word even before deciding what titles to put

out or when, prompting industry speculation—and hope—that a certain ship with a tech-savvy director at the helm will boost DVD sales by year's end. Meanwhile, the industry wonders how long Fox can remain the non-digital lone wolf.

**■ THE SEVEN YEARS ITCH** Was Brad Pitt's Seven Years In Tibeta remake? That's the Impression you might get from the coming Kino video labeled The Original Seven Years in Tibet, a 1957 documentary that combines mountaineer/Nazi ski coach Heinrich Harrer's 16 mm footage of the Dalal Lamaincluding his flight from the Red Army-with a reenactment of Harrer's own escape from a British prison camp. Admits a Kino spokesperson, "The title's the same, and that's about it."

by a year) special laserdisc edition of independence Day, which is due July 1, the film's second anniversary, will have eight minutes of extra footage edited back in—including scenes in the allen mother—

ship, the White House, and Vivica A. Fox's strip club. But the PG-13 rating probably won't change, according to a spokesperson for Dean Devlin and Roland Emmerich's Centropolis Entertainment, despite the strip-club addition:

"Well, you know, it's these guys. They don't really do anything too racy."

■ HERE'S ONE ON THE Q.T. AND VERY HUSH-HUSH... The DVD of L.A. Confidential keeps flying off the shelves. A conspiracy among rabid fans and Warner Bros.? Heavily laden with extras, the movie comes on a dual-layer disc that's trickier to produce, which means a lot more hit the trash heap, sometimes as many as one out of three, says a leading DVD retailera high body count even for film noir. The initial shipment in early May disappeared quickly. Ditto a second batch two weeks later. The same source also predicts a shortfall for the new James Bond DVD, Tomorrow Never Dies. So If you see one, jump but fast. - Michael Giltz and Troy Patterson







# The Week

#### **Recent Movies**

PONETTE Victoire Thivisol (1997, Fox Lorber, unrated, \$89.98, subtitled) "You shouldn't be too sad," u well-meaning grown-up tells the 4-year-old girl mourning the death of her mother. "Yes, I should," she answers with the clarity of the very young. Rare is the movie that sees children at their own level, yet Jacques Doillon's soul-piercing drama might not fly without the astonishing, unguarded simplicity of its lead. As Ponette, Thivisol progresses from inconsolable sorrow to somber attempts to bring her mother back, questioning her father, her friends, and God along the way. This is not childhood as Hollywood usually gives it to us, but a world of kindhearted little savages trusting that tiny steps will somehow add up to big answers. Ponette ultimately honors that trust, but it rips your heart out on the way. **A-** —Ty Burr

RENT CHECK

DONNIE Brasco (1997, Columbia Tristar, N. S19.95) was all

terrific script of kept it so many days I could have bought

Jezebel [starring Bette Davis, 1938, MGM, unrated, \$19.98].

It's a study in what we can bring to movies. We sort of lost:

sight of women characters that are bold and raucous and

strong. I'd like to remake some of those." — Ellen's JOELY FISHER

Mimic [1997; Dimension, R, \$103.99] with Mira.

superficial man and it was right up my alley." - Star Trek

Sorving Atis the kind of genre lenjoy. I'm a very

The Next Generation's BRENT SPINER

HOME ALONE 3 Alex D. Linz, Olek Krupa, Rya Kihlstedt (1997, Fox, PG, \$19.98) Director John Hughes' third milking of the franchise finds our unsupervised boy hero (Linz) taking national security into his own hands when terrorists stalk the neighborhood to recover some errant military hardware. Of course the kids will love it once Linz, cutely capable as the Macaulay Culkin stand-in, turns his house into a booby trap and the bad guys start plummeting down the ever-treacherous cellar stairs. But the pretext for this tyke's lone defense-he's home with the chicken pox-feels pretty wan next to the original's witty spin on stressed-out parents' worst nightmare. Too bad the series didn't fade out with Master Culkin's -Marion Hart soprano. C-

OSCAR AND LUCINDA Raiph Fiennes, Cate Blanchett (1997, Fox, R, \$103.99) Oscar Hopkins (Figures), an Anglican priest whose patholog-

ical gambling is an extension of his religious fervor, sails to New South Wales in the mid 1800s and meets Lucinda Leplastrier (Blanchett), an heiress with a near-orgasmic passion for eards and dice. Elaborating on Peter Carey's Booker Prize-winning novel, director Gillian Armstrong (Little Women) coaches a twitchy geekiness from Fiennes and a frisky, Pfeiffer-esque sensuality from Blanchett, lending the film more soul than the usual overcivilized period piece. I wager the tape will get shelved under Romance, a gross reduction of a love story in which chance and fate are philosophical concerns, not just tools to get lovers together. A--TP

THE LOCUSTS Kate Capshaw, Jeremy Davies, Vince Vaughn (1997, Orron R, \$99.99) Life is hard for addled young Flyboy (Davies): Not only is he caught between his emasculatory, sluttish mother (Capshaw) and the hunky drifter (Vaughn) who wants to help him break out of his damaged shell, but his existence on the feed lot where he lives is one unending tortured metaphor. Is he akin to the eponymous insectswhich, as he explains in a lengthy monologue, live underground for years before emerging briefly only to die? Or is he more like the pet bull that Mom, in a fit of rage at his sudden display of self-reliance, castrates before his eyes? "Storm's comin'," his buddy remarks at one point-weather report, or portent of doom? You can hardly hear the dialogue for all the crashing sym--Mike D'Angelo

SAINT CLARA Lucy Dubinchik, Halil Elohev (1997, Kino, unrated, \$79.95, subtitled) Not the religious biopic its title might suggest, but rather a remarkably sweet Israeli teen romance, in which the title character. a clairvoyant-telekinetic Russian immigrant (Dubinchik), uses her powers to help her classmates pass math tests, or to evacuate the town so that she and her new boyfriend (Elohev) can have a little privacy. Imagine a feel-good version of Stephen King's Carrie, as written by John Hughes circa 1985, and you'll have a good sense of this winning, gentle fable; it's a bit slight, perhaps, but every once in a while it does the heart good to see contemporary kids on screen who are more interested in holding hands than packing heat. **B** —MD'A

STEPHEN KING'S THE NIGHT FLIER Miguel Ferrer, Julie Entwisle (1998, HBO, R. \$99.99) Poor Miguel Ferrer-the man deserves better than this plodding gore-fest. Yet he gamely goes through the motions, playing grandiose, hard-boiled tabloid reporter Richard Dees,

WINNER OF THE WEEK **Kermit the Frog** The Jim Henson Company inked a fiveyear deal with Columbia: TriStar to distribute Henson's 300-hourcatalog, including all 120 episodes of The Muppet Show. Mr. Frog and friends will start coming to lily pads near you in September...

whose zest for his job is reawakened when he competes with a cutie-pie cub (Entwisle) to nail down a story about a vampire serial killer. That Dees is a blood sucker by profession in the trite "irony" this most heavy-handed of King tales makes abundantly clear. Oddly studded with moments of farce, had it been 30 minutes shorter Flier might have made a decent X-Files episode. D —Caren Weiner

**LOVE WALKED IN Denis Leary, Aitana** Sanchez-Gijon, Terence Stamp (1998, Columbia TriStar, R. \$98.99) A get-rich-quick scheme goes awry when a second-rate lounge pianist (Leary) and his chanteuse (A Walk in the Clouds' Sanchez-Gijon) put the sting on a married man (Stamp) and love rears its ugly head. Film noir? Sorry. Call this bloodless film blanc. Stamp has all the passion of a ventriloquist's dummy, Leary chain-smokes himself into a cloud of self-pity, and the doe-eyed Sanchez-Gijon gets caught in the headlights. Predictable as Raymond Chandler never was, this clone of hard-boiled desire lacks heart and heat C-—Denise Lanctot

HOLLYWOOD CONFIDENTIAL Edward James Olmos, Charlize Theron (1997, Paramount, R, \$79.99) L.A. Confidential it isn't. Another ill-conceived noir wannabe, Hollywood has Olmos heading a team of private eyes who, in addition to their



sordid yet boring jobs, must contend with the promptings of their tortured pasts (flashbacks, the urge to read Yeats aloud). The real bad guy is Miami Vice creator Anthony Yerkovich, who costars as one of the PIs and perpetrated the incoherent script. **D**-

FALL Eric Schaeffer, Amanda de Cadenet (1997, Orion, unrated, \$99.99) Schaeffer, this film's producer-writer-director-star, indulges a male fantasy playing a cabby who picks up an English supermodel (De Cadenet). Before you can say "Step on it!" she's fallen for him-hard. The meter is definitely fixed: One of the most beautiful women happily runs through his sexual wish list, goes on dates consisting of take-out and TV, and swoons over his drippy poetry. Cornedy would help the credibility factor, but Schaeffer finds himself | tras: B so presistible you laugh for all the wrong reasons. C-

Vintage Movie

THE LAWLESS BREED Rock Hudson, Julie Adams, John McIntire (1952, Universal, unrated, \$14.98) When it comes to finding entertainment value in violent desperadoes, few directors deliver like Raoul Walsh. So it would seem that this Western about real-life outlaw John Wesley Hardin would be a perfect Walsh vehicle. And it almost is: But even he couldn't overcome wrongheaded casting-in this case, young, beefeakey Rock Hudson as the hard-bitten antihero. In an otherwise brawny folktale, he stands out like a Perry Ellis model digitized into a Remington painting. Your enjoyment of the movie will depend on how adept you are at imagining Robert Mitchum in the lead role, C+ — David Everitt

WALKABOUT Jenny Agutter, Lucien John, David Gumpilil (1971, Home Vision/Criterion, unrated, \$29.95) Unlike the studied prettiness of, say, The English Patient, Nicolas Roeg's deceptively simple tale of two children lost in the Australian outback has a stark beauty that's stunning on DVD. The gorgeousness keeps their plight in perspective-you know these kids will never have it betterand also makes this an apt demonstration disc when you want to show friends how great DVD can be. Audio commentary from Roeg and Agutter is thoughtful and polite, with Agutter whispering guiltily about wearing the wrong shoes in a scene that couldn't be reshot. The movie: A- The ex---- Michael Giltz

#### Also Released

Ascendant jiggle girl Carmen Electra plays a spiritual superhero in a marvelously tacky homage to The Crow called THE CHOSEN ONE: LEGEND OF THE RAVEN (1998, Troma, R, \$59.98)... A sequel to 1993's Posse, Mario Van Peebles' LOS LOCOS: POSSE RIDES AGAIN (1998, PolyGram, R, \$101 99) peddles horse manure as a pack of committed cowboys fly over the euckoo's nest.... Touted as the highest-grossing comedy in the history of French film, LITTLE IN-DIAN, BIG CITY (1996, Touchstone, PG, \$103.99, dubbed) was the inspiration for Tim Allen's Jungle 2-Jungle and provides the same blithe inanity as its American cousin. -TP-- - -------

>> More reviews in EW Special Edition at www.ew.com < <

### 'GOOD' AND PLENTY

S GOOD AS IT GETS did as well as it could in its first week on video. James L. Brooks' comedy, which features the Oscar-winning performances of both Jack Nicholson and Helen Hunt. moved an average of 99 copies per store (58 rentals and 41 sales) for the strongest debut since Air Force One-another



TOP DOGS Nicholson and his four-legged friend how and wow

low-priced Columbia TriStar tape-touched down in February. As Good as It Gets' sterling performance is all the more impressive considering that, five months after its theatrical release, it was still playing on 805 movie screens.

TAPE	RI	ENT	ALS
LAST WEE			

	CYRL A1	ATIER AS ANALY
T	_	AS GOOD AS IT GETS Jack Nicholson, Columbia TriStar
2	3	TOMORROW NEVFR DIES Pierce Brosnan, MGM
3	3	MOUSE HUNT Nathan Lane, Dream Works
-4	2	THE JACKAL Bruce Willis, Universal
5	-	STARSHIP TROOPERS Casper Van Dien, Columbia TriStar1
6	4	KISS THE GIRLS Ashley Judd, Paramount
7	5	FOR RICHER OR POORER Tim Allen, Universal
8	7	BELLA MAFIA Vanessit Redgrave, Transark
9	6	ALIEN RESURRECTION Signumey Weaver, Fox 3
10	9	LA CONFIDENTIAL Guy Pearce, Warner 5
	***	
		ESALES
1		AS GOOD AS IT GETS Jack Nicholson, Columbia TriStar, \$22.09 1
2	1	ANASTASIA Animated, Fox, \$26.9R.
3	2	MOUSE HUNT Nathan Lane, Dream Works, \$22.99
4	4	SOUTH PARK: VOLUME 1 Animated, Warner, \$14.95 3
8		CON AIR Nicolas Cage, Timelistone, \$19.99
6	3	FLUBBER Robin Williams, Walt Disney, \$22.99 6
7	8	SOUTH PARK: VOLUME 2 Animated, Warner, \$14.95
8	9	Mike Myers, New Line, \$14.98
9	6	SOUTH PARK: VOLUME 3 Animated, Warner, \$14.95
10	6	SOUTH PARK THREE-PACK Animated, Warner, \$39.95
	I D	VIDEO SALES
	7 WEEES	
1	1	THE LITTLE MERMAID Animated, Walt Disney, \$20,99
2	16	ANASTASIA Animated, For, \$26,98.
3	4	ELMOPALOOZAI Jon Stewart, Sony Wonder, \$1298 3
4	2	HERCULES Animated, Walt Disney, \$20.99
5	5	SUBZERO Ammated, Warner, \$19.98
8	ă	PETER PAN Animaled, Walt Droney, \$20.99

FERNGULLY 2: THE MAGICAL RESCUE Animated, For. \$13.98

SLEEPING BEAUTY Antropated, Walt Disney, 32d 99

THE SIMPSONS-WAVE II Animated, Fox, \$25.98.

THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME.

Animated, Walt Disney, \$26,99

BOURCE, VIDEO INSINEER FOR THE WELR ENDING MAY SE, 1990 AND VIDEO DATE: BULL BOARD FROM THE ISSUE DATED MAY 10, 1980

# 0, Tangled Websites

The Great White Way has come to the World Wide Web. But does the oldest lively art, theater, belong on the newest medium? by Michael Feingold



THEATER IS A REAL EVENT that happens in real time. On the Internet, reality is virtual, and time-especially during downloads—is relative. So, in principle, there can't be any strong connection between theater and the Net. After a survey of some leading stage sites, I have to agree: The Web's sense of theater is minimal.

Not that you can't find plenty of trivia. Pegged to the June 7 ceremonies, the official Tony Awards website (www. tonys.org) lists this year's nominees, along with cursory data on each. It links to the they exist) where you can find a little more data plus chatty interviews with the nominees and so forth. There are even occasional sound bites, which I gave up on after attempts to download the voice of Ragtime's Audra McDonald from www.livent.com had crashed three different computers.

One thing the Tonys haven't taken into account yet is their past. The site lets you search the names of previous winners, but only for the last few years: Trying to hunt up nominees from the 1977 Broadway production of the musical Happy End, I disshows' own websites (should | covered that the website,

poor thing, had never heard of Kurt Weill. On the Obie Awards website (www.vil lagevoice.com/obies), at least you can look up every winner for the past 43 years. Trouble is, that bare information is all you'll get; the site (which I've had a hand in producing) is hardly more than a fact page.

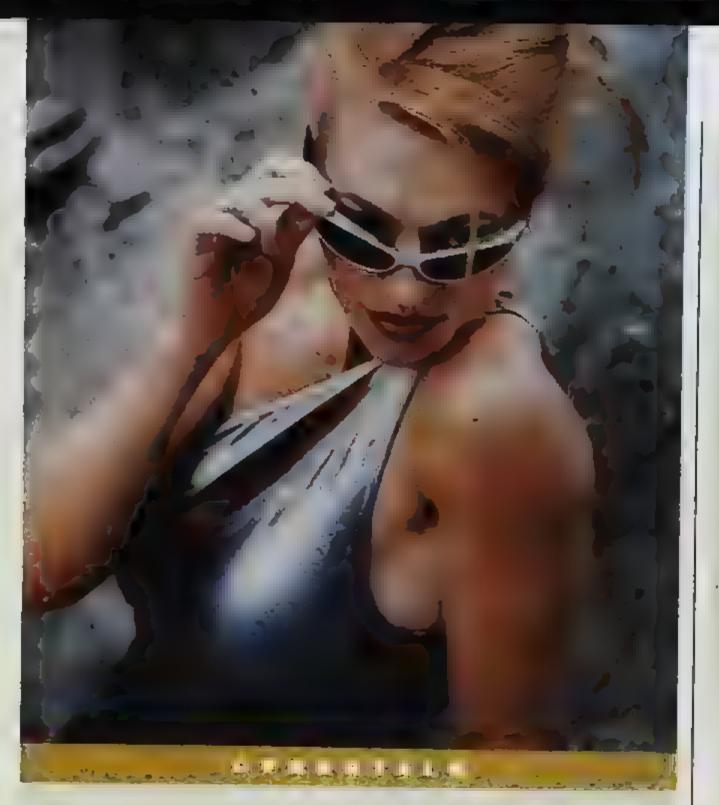
For better-dressed data, the handiest site is Playbill On-Line (www.playbill.com). The website of Broadway's program magazine moves considerably beyond Broadway in its listings of what's on: It offers hard news as well as gossipy

links let you order tickets, buy theater books, and search out convenient places to dine. Not every spot on the site is so free-ranging, though: Playbill's Who's Who only reaches back a few years and is oblivious to many influential "downtown" artists who rarely work in commercial venues.

These absences—the Tonys' past, the Obies' meaning, the great risk takers unknown to Playbill—are all symptoms of the theater websites' basic failing: They give you no glimpse of why theater's important, how it can still be thriving after thousands of years. The Web seems oddly materialistic for a virtual place, with most of these sites devoted to marketing shows like any other product. Okay, we're in a material world, but the theater exists to show us that there's more to life. The one online area where you get that sense, somewhat, is on Yahoo!, if you have the patience to prowl through the ocean of listings at www. yahoo.com/Arts/Performing\_ Arts/Theater. The subtopics here stretch in all directions, from sites for gay and lesbian theater, commedia dell'arte, and Kabuki to the inevitable Broadway and West End locations. Many turn out to be vacuous, but even at their worst they remind you that there's more to the subject than the number of Les Miz companies currently touring. Still, even the best data's no substitute for experience. If you're that interested in theater, my advice is: Log off and go see a show. Or start your own theater, after which you may never have time to log on again. Tonys: B- Playbill: B+

(Michael Feingold is chief theaterentic of The Village Voice. features; the wide-ranging  $\perp$  He has no E-mail address.)

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### GAY DECEIVER?

A "This is an enormous, enormous rumor on the Internet, and it's not true. Somebody had posted supposedly official press releases from the producer's office saying that Seven would be a lesblan, and It's not true. Now." - Star Trek: Voyager's JER! RYAN on TheGlobe.com

"My thing with Quentin [Tarantino] is not personal. I don't wish him any harm. I'm not deriving glee from the fact that his reviews were not kind. I have issues with his excessive use of the N-word. I never, ever, ever, ever said he wasn't entitled to use the word. But 38 times in Jackie Brown? I feel that's excessive." - He Got Gama director SPIKE LEE on E! Online

"Well, I'M an entertainer. I'm an actor, director, writer, producer. That's my job, to be entertaining.... I find this movie very funny.... it is not intended as a movie with a message. -Bulworth's WARREN BEATTY on RoughCut Online

"I don't waste my time to watch that low-quality episode! No, i don't waste my time! i never watch [Seinfeld] because, again, I don't believe he is a talented person!" -AL "THE SOUP MAN" YEGANEH on Real Hollywood Online

"I Was in my school cafeterla...eating lunch and a casting person asked me to audition. I never thought of being an actress. But I said, 'Okay, why not.' I didn't know all that was involved." - Deep Impact's LEELEE SOBIESKI on America Online

>> Hotlink to The Web Guide at www.ew.com <<

### STAY 'TOMB'-ED

UTT-KICKIN' GAME heroine Lara Croft's expansion kit, Tomb Raider Gold, high-kicks to No. 17 on the CD-ROM chart. Featuring additional levels and assorted new nastles, TR Gold will satisfy gamers' Croft addiction until the



big-screen version gets made. Meanwhile, Cabela's Big Game Hunter, Head Games' rip-off of ... we mean homage to ... the wildly popular hunting sim Deer Hunter stakes out at No. 7 and No. 4 on the CD-ROM and PC games charts, respectively.

#### TOP 20 CD-ROMS

BOURCE PC DATA

	OF ZO CD-ROMS
,	STARCRAFT Cendant Software, PC
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15	NORTON UTILITIES 3.0 Symantec, PC
16	
17	TOMB RAIDER GOLD Eidos, PC
18	COSMOPOLITAN VIRTUAL MAKEOVER SegaSoft, PC and Mac
19	NASCAR II Cendant Software, PC
20	QUAKE II Activision, PC
T	OP 5 PC GAMES
1	STARCRAFT Cendant Software
2	DEER HUNTER GT Interactive
3	TITANIC: ADVENTURE OUT OF TIME CyberFlix
4	CABELA'S BIG GAME HUNTER Hend Games
5	MYST Broderbund
T	OP 5 MACINTOSH GAMES
	The other 15 and 15 and 15
1	7TH GUEST Virgin Interactive
2	MYST Broderbund
2	MYST Broderbund
3 4	MYST Broderbund 2  MONOPOLY GAME Hasbro 7  MACCUBE Aztech New Media 3
2	MYST Broderbund
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2 3 4 5	MYST Broderbund
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2 3 4 5	MYST Broderbund

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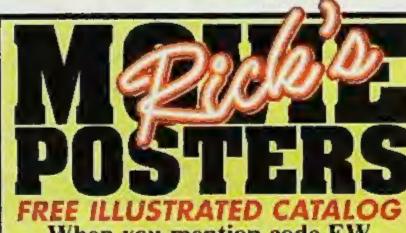


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# Lucci's First Loss

ENGORE In 1978, the soap siren won her first Best Actress Emmy nod-and began a 20-year losing streak. by Shawna Malcom

ER NAME WAS STILL A PROPER NOUN when Susan Lucci had the first of an improbable string of disappointments that would eventually inspire a new intransitive verb: "to be Luccied," i.e., to be passed over and over and over-for 20 years. • On June 7, 1978, when the All My Children star lost her first Best

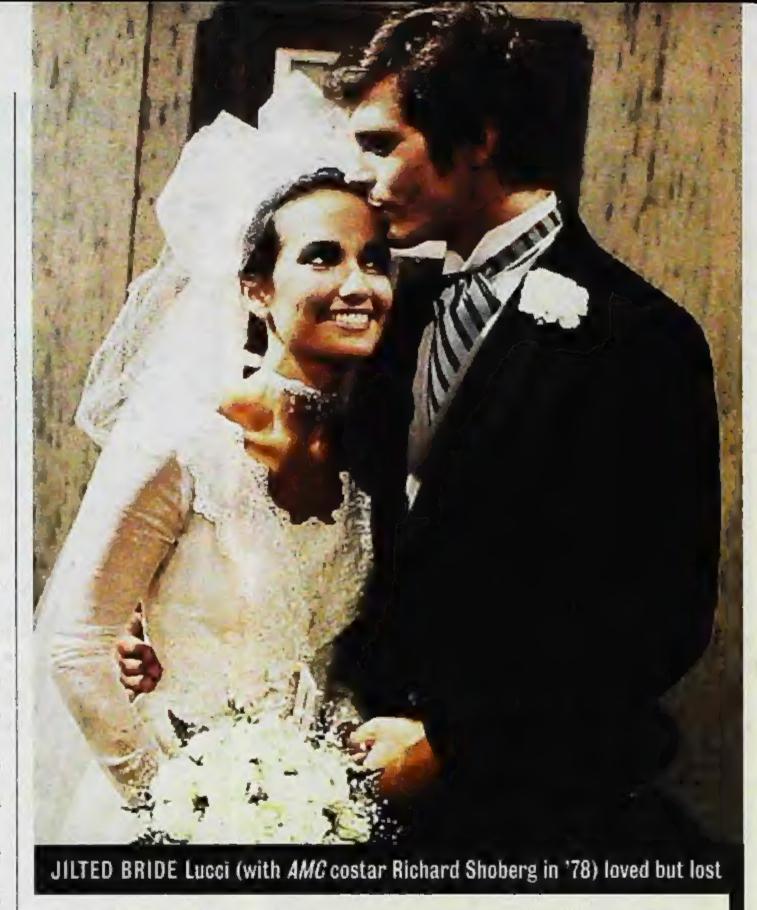
Actress Daytime Emmy for her role as the man-eating bitch goddess Erica Kane, it was hardly a headline-grabbing event. "I've never had a lot of disappointment in my



EMMY ENVY Lucci, Nixon in '98

life," Lucci said two months later. "I wonder when I'm going to get mine."

There were plenty of disheartening blows in store. Over the years, Lucci's losing streak would not only come to overshadow the annual awards ceremony but provide pop culture with a favorite punchline. In 1993, alt-rockers Urge Overkill recorded the song "Erica Kane" ("Erica Kane, another Emmy passed you by"), and in 1996 Jay Leno joined in ("Things aren't looking too good for Bob Dole. In fact, the latest polls show, if the election were held today,



Lucci"). This May, Lucci, 51, suffered an unprecedented 18th nomination and defeat.

After reportedly pounding the table in 1982 and fleeing in tears in '83, Lucci stopped ering her soap ties. preparing acceptance spiels and started turning misfortune into fortune. She ruminated on her fate in The Washington Post and spoofed herself on Saturday Night Live and in ads for the sugar substitute Sweet One.

In the process, Lucci attained a level of success unattainable for most soap actors. By 1990 she was reportedly earning \$1.3 million a year, the

Bob Dole would lose to Susan | highest salary in daytime. With a recurring Dallas stint in 1990 and several made-for-TV movies, she became the first daytime star to break into prime time without sev-

> Fortuitously, Lucci's sow's ear strategy may undermine her chances of ever snagging Emmy gold. "There's a lot of jealousy over her success," says AMC creator Agnes Nixon. "They figure, What does she need the Emmy for?" " And not winning would be no loss. As Emmy producer Al Schwartz has said: "It's better for her if she never takes the prize home."

#### time capsule / june 7, 1978

AT THE MOVIES, Sylvester Stallone (right) flexes his muscle after the Oscar-winning Rocky and hands audiences F.I.S.T., a drama starring Sly as a union organizer. The film Isn't a box office knockout, but an upcoming round would be: 1979's Rocky II. IN MUSIC, the Satur-



day Night Fever soundtrack is nearing the end of a remarkable 24 weeks atop the album charts. Last month, a Fever musical opened in London. IN BOOKSTORES, James Flxx's The Complete Book of Running is a nonfiction winner. In 1984, Fixx would suffer a heart attack while jogging and die at

the age of 52. AND IN THE NEWS, an unknown gunman believed to be a Protestant extremist critically wounds a leading member of Sinn Fein, the political arm of the IRA. In May 1998, Sinn Fein joined a historic British-backed agreement to end warfare in Northern Ireland. - Joe Neumaier

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Tima Earnshau Oscar<sup>®</sup> nomanated makeup artist "TITANIC"

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